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of ye Gospell, who dyed the 10th of
73, in the yeare of his age, 53.

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Venning's Remains,

OR,

Christ's School:

Consisting of FOUR

CLASSES OF CHRISTIANS,

I. *Babes*, III. *Young Men*,
II. *Little Children*, IV. *Fathers*.

WITH

Their several Characteristical differences and attainments; also the Doctrines proper to be taught to each of them.

Being the Substance of many Sermons Preached by **Ralph Venning**, and fitted by him for the Press before his Death.

---

1 Cor. 3. 1. *And I, Brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, as unto Babes in Christ.*

1 Joh. 2. 13. *I write unto you Fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I write unto you Young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you Little Children, because ye have known the Father.*

London, Printed for *John Hancock*, Senior and Junior, at the Sign of the three Bibles in Popes-head Ally, over against the Royal Exchange in *Cornhill*. 1675.

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Being the Substance of many Sermons Preach'd many Years ago in *Southwark*.

By **Ralph Venning.**

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Alfred Bull Dec. 6, 1917 1/2

Reader,

THough that which I here present thee with may look like a Novelty, yet I hope it will appear to be a truth of great Antiquity; for though I confess I have not met with any that have treated thus distinctly of the several Ranks and Degrees of Saints, yet I cannot say but I was led to the consideration thereof by persons both Antient and Modern of great name and worth, who have now and then hinted that in their writings, which gave me occasion to make a more full inquiry into this thing, and accordingly to Preach upon it many

years ago in *Southwark*, and I bless God, not without good acceptation and success, as I have not a little cause to presume. As to the three first States I have spoken largely, but very little of the last, *viz.* of Fathers, not willing to venture beyond my line or measure, only hinting in General what may be gather'd from the Scripture. Concerning them what I have said, I submit to the judgement of my Elders and betters, who I hope will find me moderate and modest in my Assertions, and that they are consonant to the analogy of Faith and agreeable to the tenor of Scripture both truthes and expressions. I shall say nothing more of it, for I hope it will speak for it self, only my desires to God are that it may be blest to every Reader, for their

either

either Converſion or Edification. Which Prayer if God pleaſe to grant, 'twill be matter of thankſgiving as to them ſo to me alſo, who am their Servant in and for Chriſt Jeſus,

Ralph Venning.

This

This following Advertiſement was intended as an Epiſtle to the Reader before the Author's own was found.

THis Treatiſe as it is now publiſhed, was ſo left by the worthy Author when he went to his reſt. The excellency and uſefulneſs of it will evidence it ſelf beſt in the peruſal thereof. It hath this preheminence beyond many of the practical Diſcourſes that have of late paſſed the Preſs; that its deſign is ſingular and not managed (at leſt to ſuch an enlargement) by any before it.

The ſeveral Degrees and Eſtates of Chriſtians, through which they paſs up to the meaſure and ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt, are here inſiſted on, and with great experience, according to the rule of Faith explicated with perſpicuity.

The greateſt part of the Diſcourſe is ſpent upon thoſe that make up the greateſt part of true Chriſtians, viz. *the weak ones or Babes, wherein will be found things of a comfortable concernment, and conducing very much to the eſtabliſhing of them; and promoting their advance to a greater degree of grace till they come to the aſſurance of the Love of God by the witneſs of the Spirit, which the Children enjoy. What is laid down in reference*

rence to the witness of the Spirit, though some may differ in their conceptions from it, yet such is the boundary and cautions here annexed to this particular by the Author against delusions, that no person will have a reasonable ground to make any exceptions.

What is performed in the handling of the temptations which attend the Young men, such as have attained to a strength of grace (whereby they are made conformable to Christ, who was in all things tempted as we are, yet without sin) will be of great encouragement to many in their present warfare.

As to the last Estate of Christians, viz. of Fathers, the Author hath discoursed very little, who though those that were acquainted with him, might judge him to have attained to that degree of Christianty, which lies in the highest experience of the mysteries of the Gospel; yet he through modesty leaves that for others to supply and make up.

And so you have the first remains of that good man, who was serviceable to Christ in his Generation.

The spiritual advantage of Christians is all that is aimed at in the publication thereof, and accordingly is recommended to them by the Authors very good friends,

James Barron.

John Collins.

Christ's School:

Consisting of

Babes, Children, Young-Men and Fathers.

I.

The INTRODUCTION.

where the general design and scope of the Treatise is laid down, asserted, cleared and applied.

THat there are degrees of grace, and consequently that there are Believers, Christians or Saints of several sizes and degrees is granted by all; but how many sorts there are, and whether they are to be ranked into several and distinct classes, ranks, orders, forms or degrees (as different States) seems not to be so clear to some pious and learned

men : which yet with submission I humbly offer, and hope to evince and demonstrate by the Scriptures light, which is the light of the Spirit by whom they were indited.

That there are Lambs and Sheep, *John* 21. 15, 16, 17. That there are strong and weak, *Rom.* 15. 1. That there are spiritual and Babes, 1 *Cor.* 3. 1. Or perfect and Babes, as 'tis *Hebr.* 5. 13, 14. The Scriptures quoted do undeniably assert, and experience confirms it: and why there may not be more than two sorts, I can see no reason to dis-believe, but there seems to me a great deal of reason for the belief of it; The Apostle *John* naming three (Fathers, Young men and Children) and the Apostle *Paul* names a fourth, *viz.* Babes; for though they be as carnal, yet they are in Christ, 1 *Cor.* 3. 1. but a degree below Children; as I think to make apparent in the following discourses.

To clear the way, I shall examine this Text, 1 *John* 2. 12, 13, 14. Which whether it denote and assert distinct Classes or kinds of Saints is yet the question. But I hope to evince that these are three distinct ranks and states of Saints, not with reference to their natural years, or the time of their standing (as to conversion and profession) but with reference to their proper and peculiar attainments, whether elder or younger for years and standing. In-

Partitur hic & in sequentibus Christianus in classes tres, Puerorum, Adolescentum, Senum; quæ discrimina non secundum ætatem, sed secundum gradus diversos ejus profectus qui in Christo sit, intelligi debent, Grot. *in Loc.*

deed

deed the Scripture doth not measure them by that, but by this rule; or else there could not be any gradual Apostasie in any Saints, as there was in them of the Church of *Ephesus*, *Revel.* 2. or any standing (as 'twere) at a stay; as it seems to be with them, *Heb.* 5. So that their measure is to be taken by their attainments and proficiency, not by their years; (for though wish the ancient there (usually) is wisdom, yet gray hairs are not always wise; which made *Elihu* speak as he did, *Job* 32. 7, 9. The wise are always old, but the old are not always wise:) 'tis not how long they have stood, or how many years they have been in Christ, but their injoyments, experiences, proficiency and fruitfulness that denominates one above another: some may be in Christ before others, who yet may be out-grown by others, that came in long after them; as most of the elder Disciples were out-grown by *Paul* a younger Brother, a Post-hume, one born out of due time (as he speaks of himself) who yet labour'd more abundantly than they all: so, many that are last shall be first. Some that are young for years, may be Fathers for experiences and attainments, when others that are old and aged as to time, may be but young and raw in knowledge and practice. Some are but children when they are old, and others may be men, when they are but young; as *Timothy* was, who knew the Scriptures from (the cradle and from the breast as 'twere, or from) a child. Some are but like *David*, a youth and stripling, and yet of more true valor

See Wisd. 4. 8, 9.

1 Cor. 15. 8, 9, 10.

and worth than *Goliah* who was a man of war from his youth, that I may speak by alluſion. The Apoſtle tells us of ſome that for their time (if that had been the meaſure) might have been Teachers of others (might have attained to a great degree) but were ſuch Punies and Babes, that they needed to learn the A. B. C. of Religion; they were dull of hearing, had very weak ſtomachs and an ill digeſtion, *Heb.* 5. From whence this clearly and roundly follows, that a man, many men, may be of long ſtanding in Chriſt, may be old (Fathers) for years, and yet be but Babes for underſtanding and ability to digeſt the ſtrong meat of the Goſpel: Whereas other men, that are but Babes for time, but newly-new-born, may be men in Chriſt, as *Paul* was in a little time, according to that phraſe of his, 2 *Cor.* 12. 2. if I may ſo apply it: and out of the mouths of ſuch (for their time but Babes and Sucklings) there may be more perfect praiſe, than from elder Perſons, men of many years ſtanding.

'Tis true, gray hairs found in a way of righteouſneſs are a Crown of glory (and uſually the elder the wine is, the better) and as to many of Gods Saints, their works have been more at laſt than at firſt, and their latter end better than their beginning: Father *Abraham*, Father *Job*, Father *Moſes*, Father *Paul*, and ſome others were Fathers not only for age but grace: in *Act.* 21. 16. there is mention made of one *Mnaſon*, an old Diſciple, who was (another *Gaius*) an entertainer of the Apoſtles and Saints; but he is not called an old Diſciple

ciple meerly (as I ſuppoſe) for his years or age, but that he was as much a Diſciple as he was old (from his new birth) his Diſcipleſhip, faith and obedience ran along, and kept pace with his age, that as he grew in years, ſo he e did in grace; he was an old Diſciple, a good proficient in the ſchool of Chriſt. 'Twas great commendation to *Andronicus* and *Junia*, not only that they were in Chriſt before *Paul*, but that they were of note, eminent, ſignal nd of renown, *viz.* for their religion, *Rom.* 16. . Glorious (becauſe gracious) things are oken of old *Zacharie* and *Elizabeth*, Luk. 1. , 7. And 'twas the great praiſe of the Church *Thyatira*, that her laſt works were more han her firſt. But though it were thus with me, 'twas not ſo with all that were of equal ge and ſtanding with theſe: for ſome were er learning and learnt but little, ever doing et did but little; the widows mite was more han theirs that caſt in much; *Philadelphia*, hat had but little ſtrength did effectually do ore, than *Epheſus*, of whom greater things re ſpoken, *Heb.* 3. 8. with *ch.* 2. 2, 3. Eve- y man in Chriſt is not a man in Chriſt Jeſus, ut a child it may be, or perhaps but a Babe. n this Text of *Johns*, here were Children hat were Fathers, Children that were young len, and Children that were but Children: nd ſome others are but Babes, for under heſe four heads all are contained.

To clear this a little more let us conſider each erſe a part and briefly: *verſ.* 12. I write to you ittle Children, τεκνια, which is not the ſame

word we render little children, *Verſ.* 13. that is παιδία; but this word τεκνία, *ver.* 12. is common to them all, to Fathers, to young men and to children, and ſo Mr. *Cotton* underſtands it, on *Verſe* 12. and *Grotius*, ſo doth *Zanchie*, *nomine* τεκνίων i. e. *filiorum omnes veri Chriſtiani, quòd per miniſterium Apoſtolorum regeniti ſint Chriſto & Deo.* In or under this name are comprehended all true Chriſtians, becauſe by the Miniſtry of the Apoſtles they were begotten (or born) again to Chriſt and to God: ſo again on *Verſe* 13. *Nam & Commune omnibus Chriſtianis nomen*, τεκνία. 'Tis a name common to all Chriſtians. So that this word notes not any diſtinct ſtate as the other three do, *viz.* Fathers, Young-men, and παιδία little Children, all which words the Apoſtle uſeth but this once and that in this diſtribution, except παιδία once more, *Verſe* 18. but the other, *viz.* τεκνία he uſeth ſeven or eight times in common to them all: and accordingly the privilege annexed (forgiveneſs of ſins) is in common to them all, to the youngeſt as well as the eldeſt, to the Child and Babe as well as to the Young-man and Father-Saint; though it be not known by nor manifeſted to all alike.

If it ſhould be here inquired why the Apoſtle uſeth the diminutive ſo often, and ſpeaks to them as (not τέκνα Children but τεκνία) little Children; I Anſwer that it may be an alluſion to the manner and cuſtom of the *Jewiſh* Teachers, which was to call their Scholars *Ketanim*, little ones: yet withal it notes with what tenderneſs he loved them, and how dear they were

were unto him, as having begotten them by the preaching of the Gospel, as *Paul* did the *Corinthians*, whom he calls beloved Sons, 1 *Cor.* 4. 14, 15. and the *Galatians*, whom he calls by this name, *little Children*, Gal. 4. 19. and as our Saviour did his Disciples, *John* 13. 33. in conformity to whom *John* (who was the Beloved and loving Disciple) useth this word.

But I proceed to *Verse* 13, 14. where we have three distincts Classes or States of Christians, with the proper and peculiar Attainment which is the character of each of them. 1. *The Fathers*, who had the knowledge (the most exact and perfect knowledge) of him who was from the beginning, that is Christ Jesus, as 1 *John* 1. 1. with *John* 1. 1, 2. The ancient of days, the everlasting Father, as Christ is called, *Dan.* 7. 9, 13, 22. and *Isa.* 9. 6. Who is the same to day as yesterday and will be for ever, *Heb.* 13. 8. The Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, which is and which was and which is to come *Jehova*, *Rev.* 1. 8. 'Tis *q. d.* you are well acquainted with his several dispensations and workings from first to last. And this is repeated, *Vers.* 14. Secondly, *The Young-men* of whom 'tis said, that they have overcome the wicked one; and *Verse* 14. that they were strong, that the word of God did abide in them, (*viz.* in strength, like *Josephs* bow, *Gen.* 49. 24. and) that they had overcome the wicked one. Thirdly, *The little Children*, of whom 'tis said that they have

known the Father; *viz.* as their heavenly Father who hath loved them.

This is the ſumm of theſe Verſes; which Interpreters generally underſtand to be ſpoken of all the orders of Chriſtians, and that there are no other than what are comprehended under theſe three names, *viz.* that all Saints are either little Children, or Young-men, or Father-Saints: but with ſubmiſſion I conceive that there is a fourth, inferior to, or younger than the youngeſt of theſe, who are (and are called) Babes, who do not (as ſuch and as yet) know the Father; as the little Children are ſaid to do. Mr. *Cotton* doth render παιδία Babes, as the vulgar Latine doth, *infantes*; but ſaith *Beza*, βρέφος *inferius quiddam ſignificat quam* παιδίον, and ſaith *Eraſmus*, *Infans* a Babe is by the Greeks called βρέφος *aut* νήπιος; by which laſt word the Babe-Saint is expreſt in Scripture, again and again, and is of a lower form than the little Children, as God willing ſhall be made to appear hereafter, when I come to handle the Characteriſtical differences of each ſtate. Of which for the preſent I hint only this in the General, that the Fathers are ſo called (whether elder or younger for years) from their great experience and wiſdom, having gone through each of the inferior States; the Young-men are denominated from their ſtrength (of faith) whereby they overcome the evil or wicked one; the little Children have their Character from knowing the Father, which notes a ſtate of aſſurance; and the Babes from eating milk, the firſt principles, *viz.* repen-

cpentance, faith, &c. with desires after rowth; all which is evident from the several laces of Scripture, where these distinct Classes nd forms are mentioned, and that under these ery names, all which we shall examine God illing in the following treatise.

Having thus given a general account of my ntendment and design, *viz.* to treat of the everal Classes and forms (if I may so speak) f Saints, I shall for the present, make some eneral application of the whole, and speak a ttle first to all, and then to every one, of these. *o all.* 1. Love one another without dissi- ulation, unfeignedly, and with a pure heart rvently, 1 *Pet.* 1. 22. but love not the world or the things of the world, *viz.* the lusts f the flesh, the lusts of the eye, and the pride f life, 1 *John* 2. 15, 16. to both these (that receeding, and this succeeding the Text) oth the word *I write unto you*, and *I have ritten to you* refer. He obligeth all of them o these two things, because their sins were orgiven them, *Verse* 12. and each of them by heir particular priviledges; *viz.* the Fathers, ecause they have known him that is from the eginning: the young men, because they are rong, and are Conquerours: the Children, ecause they have known the Father: *q. d.* eeing these things are so, love one another s I said before, and love not the world, which is that I now say.

2. Let none measure himself by another, or make comparisons either for lifting up or asting down. Some of the *Corinthians* were 1 Cor 4. 6, —8.

apt

apt to be puffed up becauſe of their ſuppoſing themſelves to have attained more than others, which is an ill ſign; for though they were high in gifts and parts, they were low in grace, for they were but Babes; and therefore the Apoſtle pulls down their Plumes with this quick interrogation, Who makes thee (whoever thou be) who makes thee to differ? And what haſt thou that thou didſt not receive? Now, if thou didſt receive it, why doſt thou glory (pride thy ſelf and boaſt) as if thou didſt not receive it? *Grace gives us no leave to be proud, nor to deſpiſe undervalue others.* And on the other hand there are ſome poor ſouls (and I believe there were ſuch among the *Corinthians*, as I ſhall clear by and by) that are apt to deſpond, when they compare and meaſure themſelves by others; when a Dwarf ſtands by a Gyant, a man of low ſtature by a tall one, as *David* by *Goliah*, he ſeems comparatively to be no body; but yet is (for kind) a man, a perfect man for all that, or notwithſtanding the great and vaſt difference that is between the one and the other. Many poor ſouls when they ſee how they are outſtript (in knowledge, faith, love and patience) by ſome that came into Chriſt long after themſelves, are apt to think that they are no Saints, becauſe they are not *ſuch* Saints; and this ſeems to be the caſe of ſome of the *Corinthians*, as I newly hinted, which will appear from 1 *Cor.* 12. 15, *&c.* There were ſome who were but as the foot (both in ſtate and ſenſe) the very loweſt mem-

ber

ber of the body, and were therefore too prone and inclinable to think that they were not of the body: for thus the Apoſtle ſpeaks to them, If the foot ſhall ſay, becauſe I am not the hand; I am not of the body, is it therefore not of the body? and if the ear ſhall ſay, becauſe I am not the eye, I am not of the body, is it therefore not of the body? No, no, you ſhould by no means ſay ſo, 'tis a meer *non ſequitur*. So if thou ſhouldſt ſay, becauſe I am not a Father, I am not a Child of God; it doth not follow, for thou maiſt be a Young-man; if not that, yet a little Child; if not that, yet a Babe in Chriſt; begin loweſt, do not ſtretch thy ſelf beyond thy meaſure. Nor let any be proud if they are gone beyond others, to be puffed up and deſpiſe the weak. But,

3. Let every one be thankful and bleſs God for what he hath attained, be it more or leſs: Are any of you, Cedars in Lebanon, when others are but Shrubs, as the Hyſope on the wall, or as the lillies of the valley? are any of you (like *Saul*) taller than your Brethren by the head and ſhoulders? are you crowned with the gray-hairs of wiſdom and righteouſneſs? have ye overcome the wicked one? have ye lain in the Fathers boſom? *give God the Glory, who gave you the Grace.* Are others of you but of late admiſſion? or but of little and low ſtature? are ye but Babes in Chriſt? Yet deſpiſe not the day of ſmall things, let none of his mercies or conſolations be ſmall to you, who are leſs than the leaſt of them all. *'Tis great mercy*

to be one of Christs, though but one of his little ones. Our Lord Jesus chose twelve to be with him, as his family, whereof three were (*è secretioribus*) admitted to be his confidents, *Peter*, *James* and *John*, and of these three, *John* was the darling; he was the Disciple whom Jesus loved with a peculiar love, and was admitted to lie in his bosom: now if thou be not a *John*, yet thank him, if thou be a *Peter* or a *James*; if not of them, yet that thou art one of the twelve, but not *Judas*; if not one of the twelve to be with him, yet one of the seventy (for he afterward inlarged the number) to do him any service abroad. Bless him that thou art a member of his body, though but an ear or a foot: that thou art a starr in his firmament, though not of the first magnitude, but the very least of all. *David* had his several Worthies, and the lowest was honorable, though he attained not to the first three, 2 *Sam.* 23. 23. and among the thirty seven, *Uriah* the *Hittite* was the last, *Verse* 39. Though thou be the last, yet 'tis mercy to be one of the thousands of *Israel*. Though thou do not sit at the Kings table, yet bless him if thou be a Dore-keeper to behold his goings out and comings in. Bless him that thou art one of the little flock, though thou be not the Principal, or the choise, but the least of it. If thou have learnt the A. B. C. of Godliness, the first principles and elements of the Doctrine of Christ, bless him for it; thou knowest not how soon he may teach thee to spell out, yea to read distinctly the more perfect lessons,

that

that thy joy may be full: he takes notice of the kindneſs of thy Child-hood, of thy liſpings and eſſays to ſpeak and go, and he will perhaps take thee by the hand and teach thee to go from form to form, till thou come to be one of the uppermoſt in the School of Chriſt, and then he will remove and tranſlate thee into the Univerſity (the holy Academy,) where the Spirits of juſt men made perfect will bid thee welcome and be glad of thy Company: then ſhalt thou be of the Society of true Chriſtians, of them that are in Chriſt indeed, and ſhalt live with Chriſt for ever, which is beſt of all. At preſent, if thou be not worth thouſands (rich in grace) yet bleſs him that thou art worth any thing, worthy of his calling, and made meet to partake of the inheritance of the Saints in light, *Coloſſ.* 1. 12. by being delivered from the power of darkneſs and tranſlated into the Kingdom of his dear Son, *Verſe* 13. Though he have not made thee a Father, yet bleſs him that he hath made thee a Son, though as yet but a Babe and under age: *he that bleſſeth God for a little, is in the ready way to be bleſt with more.* Therefore again,

4. Let every one (that is not) aim to be a Father, and every one that is (a Father) aim at being more ſo; for as there is a growth from one kind to another, ſo there is a growth from one degree to another: aym at and preſs forward to the higheſt ſtate and utmoſt degree of perfection, as Saint *Paul* did, and thereby ſhews others the way; *Philip.* 3. 12, ——17. Be not content with being Babes, but grow

from

from thence to be little Children, and from thence to be Young-men; and from thence to be Fathers; and ſo to be perfect men in Chriſt Jeſus, *Epheſ* 4. 13,——16. Go from ſtrength to ſtrength till ye appear before God in *Zion*, which is above. Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, 1 *Pet.* 3. 18. He had ſaid immediately before, take heed, that ye fall not from your own ſtedfaſtneſs, but leſt ye ſhould think it enough not to be Apoſtates, or to be ſtedfaſt, he preſently and in the ſame breath ſubjoyns, but grow in grace, *&c.* So 'tis not only be ſtedfaſt and immoveable, but abound, yea be always abounding in the work of the Lord, 1 *Cor.* 15. 58. and the Apoſtle *Peter* would not have us think that to be new-born and ſo to partake of a Divine nature is ſufficient, but ſaith he, beſides this add to your faith, *&c.* And if theſe things be in you (is that enough? No, but if theſe things be in you) and abound, then an abundant entrance ſhall be adminiſtred to you into the everlaſting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. 2 *Pet.* 1. 4,—— 11. Do not content your ſelf meerly with ſo much grace as will bring you into heaven (the haven of happineſs,) but that you may enter in with full ſails, with a plerophorie and full aſſurance.

5. Let not the weak envy (though they may emulate) the ſtrong, nor let the ſtrong deſpiſe the weak, but be helpers of their faith and joy. Poor Babes are apt to ſuffer their

their eye to be evil, because God is good; to grow sullen, if others speed better than themselves; but these things ought not to be so: for God may do with his own what he pleaseth, and give to every one as he will. Many of this form are like *David's* Brother *Eliab*, who charged his inquisitive boldness upon the pride of his heart, and considered not that it was of the Lord, who had chosen and preferr'd him before himself who was the elder Brother, 1 *Sam.* 17. 28. with 1 *Sam.* 16. 6, 7. Which haply was (*altâ mente repostum*) the very reason of the grudge and picque against his Brother *David*. *Saul* also ey'd him with an evil eye, when his Victories increased, and the ten thousands were attributed to *David*, and but thousands to himself; 1 *Sam.* 18. 5,——9. Thus 'tis with weak Christians, they are apt to envy their superiors and betters the very grace of God: but let envyings as well as wrath be laid aside, which the Apostles speaks to Babes, 1 *Pet.* 2. 1, 2. On the other hand, let not the strong despise the weak, but bear with and bear their infirmities, which is to fulfil the Law of love and of Christ, *Gal.* 6. 2, 3. with *Rom.* 15. 1,——7. this honour is due to these weaker Vessels, for God hath bestowed it upon them, he hath so temper'd the body that the hand cannot say to the eye, I have no need of thee, nor again the head ('tis strange, for the head is Christ; yet his Church is his fulness, *Ephes.* 1. 23. much less can any of the members) say to the feet, I have no need of you, nay much more those members

members of the body, which seem to be most feeble, are (not only convenient, but) necessary. And not only we do, or ought to give, but God himself doth give more abundant honour to that part which lacketh, 1 *Cor.* 1. 12. 21,—24. 'Tis said, *Prov.* 22. 2. The rich and poor meet together (in the same body) and the Lord is the maker of them all; he that made him poor, and thee rich, could have made him rich and thee poor: and as 'tis now, the rich need the poor as much as the poor need the rich; therefore despise not the poor and low. *Job* tells us that he despised not (nor durst to despise) the cause of his Man-servant; no, nor of his Maid-servant; no, though they contended with him; for as he saith he could not Answer it to God, who made and fashioned his Servant in the womb, as he did himself, *Job* 31. 13,—15. Excellent arguments!

Well then, let not the Babe envy the Young-men, *&c.* In a great court many times there is a special favorite, but all the rest are apt to envy him, though they also are in the same court, because they are not favoured and honoured as he is: *Every one would be the only one.* So too often in the Court of Heaven upon Earth, *i. e.* the Church, Jesus Christ the King of Saints takes one or other (as *John*) to be his bosom favorite, and truely the other ambitious Courtiers cannot bear this, they look upon such a person with an evil eye: as *Peter* did upon *John*, as you may read *John* 21. When Christ Jesus had told *Peter* not only

only what he must do, but suffer also, (in relation to which he makes sure of his love first, for one that loves not, or loves little, will not do or suffer much or willingly, yet after this being told of his sufferings) and nothing of that nature said concerning *John*, he seems to take it ill, and is not able to forbear asking the Question, and *what shall this man do?* which was a spice of envy, for Christ takes him up for't with an angry, *what is that to thee?* Joh. 21. 15--22. When some poor souls, Babes that they are! see Children-Saints made so much of, that they enjoy the light of Gods countenance, and lie in his bosom all the day long: and others Young-men-Saints making great conquests and obtaining victories over temptations; and when they hear Father-Saints tell long stories of their antient acquaintance with Christ through every turn and dispensation, and what variety of experiences they have had in all conditions; and withal, how little joy, victory, experience, *&c.* they themselves have, they are apt to envy and regret the others enjoyments and glory. So perhaps on the other side, when the Fathers hear the younger ones speak of experiences, how they lisp and speak but *dimidiata verba*, half words, and see how short they fall of their attainments; when the Young-men see how the Children are baffled and led into captivity by temptations; when the little Children see how ignorant the Babes are, and that they know not their Father: at such times the rich and strong are apt to deride, or at least to undervalue the poor and weak as unworthy of their company

and converſe. 'Tis but too common with them that know much to know it too much; and for them that are wiſe and rich, though but in their own eyes ſo many times, to have very low thoughts, and to ſpeak as meanly of their inferiours: but it ſhould not be ſo with Saints, if it be, 'tis their infirmity, not to give it a worſe name: let not therefore him that eateth ſtrong meat, deſpiſe him that eateth milk, nor let him that eateth but milk, envy him that eateth ſtrong meat; that I may allude ſomething to what the Apoſtle ſpeakes in another caſe, *Rom.* 14. 3.

6. Seeing there are ſeveral degrees of Saints, let all be willing that each may have a ſhare and portion at a Sermon, or in an Epiſtle, as here in 1 *Joh.* 2. 13, 14. or at leaſt that ſome may be ſpoken to at one time and ſome at another, for we cannot ſpeak to all at once. Some men muſt have patience at a Doal, for all cannot be ſerved at one time: ſo it is in this caſe. Some when they come to a Sermon, think nothing worth the hearing, but what is ſpoken to their caſe; and truly almoſt ſo many minds as men: if it be not a diſcourſe for humbling, ſaith one; for conſolation, ſaith another; for exhortation, ſaith a third, 'tis nothing worth: Thus *one is for Paul, another for Apollo, and a third for Cephas: ſome for Barnabas, and others for Boanerges:* ſome for the Law, and others for free-grace: ſome for Faith, and others for Works. Fathers are for antiquities; Young-men for wars; Children for love-tokens; and Babes for milk: But, my beloved, all ſhould

wait

wait for their meat and portion in due ſeaſon. And,

7. Every one ſhould endeavour to make the beſt uſe of what they hear and read. All Scripture is profitable, and is written for every ones learning. Are Fathers ſpoken to, 'tis of uſe to the younger ſort to provoke them to aſpire and endeavour after ſuch attainments and experiences; and therefore the Apoſtle reſolved to go on and to treat of perfection (ſtrong meat and doctrine) though his Hearers were but Babes, *Heb.* 6. 1. Are the younger ſort ſpoken to, 'tis of uſe to Fathers, to call to remembrance what once they were; for ſuch were ſome of you: And alſo to ſtir them up to thankfulneſs, that God hath advanced them to a ſtate, of which it may be ſaid, ſuch honour have not all the Saints: and to ſay as *David* did, *Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my houſe, that thou haſt brought me hitherto?* 2 Sam. 7. 18. I have heard of an eminent perſon, who had been with others at a Sermon, and when ſome complained and ſeemed to be offended, becauſe the Preacher was a *Boanerges*, and threatned wrath and the flaſhes of Hell fire to ſinners, he told them 'twas one of the ſweeteſt and moſt comfortable Sermons that he had heard of a long time, for ſaid he, *I bleſs God I am delivered from it all.* This is to make a good uſe of a Sermon. Do you that are Saints hear Sermons Preacht to ſinners, to ſhew the miſery of their condition? then bleſs God that hath converted you. Do you that are ſinners hear Sermons Preacht to Saints, to ſhew their priviledges

and happineſs? then pray to God to make you Saints alſo. Thus all and every one may make a good uſe of every Sermon they hear. Do not be offended or take pet, and ſay, I had as good to have ſtaid at home, what doth this concern me? Oh let not any ſay ſo. *Concern thee?* There is no truth, no doctrine but doth more or leſs concern thee, be thou a ſinner or a Saint; be thou a Father, Young-man, little Child, or Babe. And this brings me to ſpeak particularly a few words to each.

1. To Fathers, I entreat you, (for ſo I am commanded to do, 1 *Tim.* 5. 1.) I entreat you to lay aſide childiſh things, and let it not be ſaid of any of you, that you were once a man but twice a child. 'Tis not comely for aged perſons to play the child, or to play with children. Saith the Apoſtle, *When I was a Child*, then indeed *I ſpake as a Child, I underſtood as a Child, I thought as a Child: but when I became a man I put away childiſh things*, 1 Cor. 13. 11. The aged men and women ſhould be ſober and grave, teaching and giving examples to the younger ſort, *Tit.* 2. 2——4. So *Paul* propounds himſelf, *Phil.* 3. 17. with 20, *Brethren, be followers of me, and mark them that walk ſo, as you have us for an example, for our converſation is in Heaven.* Which (it ſeems) was written by him when he was *Paul* the aged, it being when he was priſoner at *Rome*, and then he ſtiles himſelf *Paul* the aged as well as a priſoner, *Philem.* 9. Fathers and old men love to be telling ſtories, ſo do you read Lectures of your experiences to the younger ſort, and tell them

them (as *David* did his Children,) what God hath done for your ſoul. Tell them how God converted you, how God carried you on ſtep by ſtep, from Faith to Faith, and from one degree to another till you became Fathers in *Iſrael*. I might add alſo, diſdain not to learn, for S. *John* writes to you Fathers alſo concerning brotherly love, and not loving of the world, as if you had not perfectly learnt theſe things. But,

2. To Young-men I ſay, *Be ſtrong in the grace that is in Chriſt Jeſus, and the Word that abideth in you*; acquit your ſelves ſtill like the *good Souldiers of Jeſus Chriſt*, as *Paul* ſpeaks to the young-man, 2 *Tim.* 2. 1, 3. *And intangle not your ſelves with the affairs of this life* (the love of the world) *that you may pleaſe him who hath choſen you to be Souldiers*, Ver. 4. The Fathers are for counſel, but you young-men for War; they ſit at ſtern, but you muſt fight; the glory of young-men is their ſtrength: be ſtrong then in Faith, for thence is your victory, by which you overcome the Devil and the World, *Eph.* 6. 16. 1 *Joh.* 5. 4——5. *and flee youthful luſts*, 2 Tim. 2. 22. *For they war againſt your ſouls*, 1 Pet. 2. 11. From theſe 'tis no cowardiſe but courage (even in young-men, who are ſtrong and Souldiers) to run and flee away.

Take heed of Pride alſo to which young and ſtrong-men ſouldiers are very prone; young and ſtrong men uſe to vapour and boaſt how they can caſt the Bar, Vault, Leap and do feats of activity and arms, what victories they ob-

tain: Well, though your marrow be in your bones (the Word of God abiding in you) yet be not lifted up, for Pride goeth before a fall. *A mans Pride shall bring him low*, how high and strong soever he be, *Prov.* 29 23. And the helpers of Pride or strength shall stoop under him, because of Gods anger, *Job* 9. 13. *For God resisteth the proud*, therefore ye younger *be clothed with humility*, 1 Pet. 5. 5.

3. To the Children-Saints I say, be obedient to your Father, whom you know and know him to be loving, and be loving to your brethren, whom you are to love for your Fathers sake; and whom if ye love not, you love not the Father, 1 *Joh.* 4. 20, 21. 1 *Joh.* 5. 1, 2. The Fathers are for knowledge, the young-men for strength, but you are for love: your state and age is proper for love.

4. To the Babe-Saints I say with the Apostle, 1 *Pet.* 2. 1, 2. *As new-born Babes desire the sincere milk of the Word that you may grow thereby, seeing ye have tasted* (and as yet but tasted) *that the Lord is gracious*. *Milk* is your proper food, *desires* your proper Acts, *growth* that which is set before you as their end, and tasting, *i. e.* experience the provoking of your appetite and desire thereunto. Desire it then that you may grow thereby to a stronger constitution and higher Stature.

II. *Several things premiſed for the further clearing and underſtanding of this Subject, before I ſpeak to each Claſſis.*

HAving already given a general account of my intendment, I ſhall for the more clear and diſtinct proceeding, lay down ſeveral things as *Præcognita* neceſſary to be known before I handle each Claſſis or form by it ſelf and a part. As,

1. There is a vaſt difference between the leaſt or loweſt of Saints, and the higheſt of men, that are but meer men and unconverted: between the worſt of Saints (*viz.* Babes) and the beſt of men, *viz.* Philoſophers, and Moral men. *Socrates* and *Seneca*, &c. are great inſtances how far men may go by Natures help; and *Paul* (who was called *Saul*) before His converſion, how far a man may go by the help of the Law, *Phil.* 3. 6. And yet the leaſt Saint, in the School of Chriſt, outgoes and ſurpaſſeth all theſe, 1 *Cor.* 1. 18.--31. and 1 *Cor.* 2. 6 ——10 for he is taught of God, *Matth.* 11. 25. and though he be but a Babe, yet he is in Chriſt, and though as carnal, yet not a carnal man, 1 *Cor.* 3. 1. as all are that are not in Chriſt Jeſus, and ſo new-creatures; Gold though but in the Ore exceeds the beſt of clay and earth: ſo a Babe-Saint, which is but Gold in the Ore, doth yet exceed and excel all other men, which are but

clay and of the earth, earthly. The Philoſophers tells us that the leaſt Fly hath more of excellency in it than the higheſt Heavens, becauſe 'tis a living thing, and moves from an internal principle of life, which they have not. And the wiſeſt of men, *Solomon* tells us that a living Dog is better than a dead Lion: all which imports that life is the excellency of any being, and the more life the more excellency. Now men that are not converted are dead in ſins wherein they walk, as the Prodigal was, *Luk.* 15. 32. and all were, *Epheſ.* 2. 1, 2, 3. And 'tis ſaid of the Gentiles again, that they were alienated from the life of God, *Chap.* 4. 18. But the leaſt, the Babe-Saint is quickened and made alive, for behold he breaths (Prayers) as 'twas ſaid of *Paul* as ſoon as he was new-born, *Acts* 9. 11. Theſe Babes have life, yea life more abundantly, for in a meaſure and degree they partake of a Divine nature and life.

'Tis upon this account (among others and in the firſt place) that the righteous is better than his Neighbour, *viz.* that is not righteous, *Prov.* 12. 26. The leaſt Saint is better than the beſt man in the Pariſh that is not a Saint. As our Saviour ſaid of *John*, That he was among them born of women one of the greateſt, yet that he who was leaſt in the Kingdom of God was greater than he, *Matth.* 11. 11. ſo in an alluſive ſenſe I may ſay, that the leaſt and loweſt of Saints, born of God, is greater than the greateſt that is but born of a Woman. They that believe in Jeſus have this honor to be called

(and

nd to be) the Sons of God, who are born not
f Blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of
he will of man, but of God; and surely they
re most highly descended who are born from
bove, or of God. *Job.* 1. 12, 13. and
am. 1. 18. *Of his own will begat he us, that
e should be the first-fruits* (i. e. the most ex-
llent) *of his creatures*: For as manis greater
an all the Creation of God (Angels except-
, *Psal.* 8. 4.——8.) so of all men, the
ints are the first-fruits, and in some respect
dvanced beyond the Angels, *Heb.* 1. 14. For
he Angels are their attendants and servitours,
ea they learn of the Church the manifold (or
uch varying) wisdom of God, *Ephes.* 3. 10.
nd though Christ be head over them, yet he
not their head, as he is the head of the
hurch which is his Body, *Ephes.* 1. 22, 23.
nd 5. 23. The best of men are but men at best,
ut grace makes men more men than they
ere, and more than men.

2. As there is a great difference between
ints and men, so there is disparity between
ints and Saints; they (as the Stars) differ
om one another in glory: All Saints are ex-
llent, but they are [illegible] all alike excellent,
al. 16. 3. All of them do vertuously, but
me excel the rest. In the Body of man there
re some members that are far more noble than
thers, there are principal and vital, and there
re less principal and but accidental as to life,
ndeed all the members of Christs body are vi-
l and necessary, and yet some are more so
han others; and as to their functions and ope-

rations

rations do far excel the reſt: as the eye doth the ear, the hand the foot, 1 *Cor.* 12. And the Apoſtle tells us, 2 *Tim.* 2. 20. That *in a great houſe* (ſuch is Gods Church) *there are veſſels of Gold, and veſſels of Silver, and alſo of wood and earth, ſome to honour and ſome to diſhonour*, which refers (not only to the difference that there is between common and ſpecial grace among men and Profeſſours, as *Rom.* 9. 21. but) to the true members of the body, as 1 *Cor.* 12. 23. they are called leſs honourable: Now no man doubts but the veſſels of Silver and Gold are more excellent and honourable than them of earth and wood. There are ſome that are but wooden-Saints, and but earthen-Saints, in compariſon of ſome that are Silver and others that are golden-Saints: See and conſider 1 *Cor.* 3. 12, ——— 15. Yet this I ſay alſo, that the higheſt of Saints doth not ſo far exceed or excel the loweſt, as the loweſt exceeds and excels the higheſt of men; for the Saints compared one with another differ but (*gradu*) gradually, but Saints and men do differ (*ſpecie*) in kind: Gold in the Oare is not ſo much inferiour to the moſt refined and pure Gold, as clay and earth is inferiour to Gold in the Oare; that difference is but gradual, but this is ſpecifical.

3. There is ſomething common to all the Saints of what degree ſoever they be, *viz.* they are all born of God, all his Children, all taught of God from the greateſt to the leaſt, *Heb.* 8. 11. with 1 *Joh.* 2. 20, ——— 27. which he ſpeaks of the (*παιδία*) little Children,

dren, to whom he last of all addreſt his ſpeech, *v.* 18. The Babe is in Chriſt Jeſus as well as the Father, though not ſo well rooted and grounded in him, 1 *Cor.* 3. 1. *Col.* 2. 6, 7. their ſins are forgiven alike, 1 *Joh.* 2. 12. to be gracious is common to all, though ſome have more grace than others; as 'tis to all men to be rational, though ſome are more rational than others. Truth of Grace is common to all, though growth of Grace be (in ſome reſpects) more peculiar to ſome. They are all brethren, and are brought forth in the Image of God, and created according to him (or his likeneſs) in righteouſneſs and holineſs of truth: You may eſpie——the Fathers Image in the Babe his eye. Though they be but newly born, yet they are new-born and new creatures. In ſhort and fine, they are all members of the Body, the foot as well as the hand, the ear as well as the eye, 1 *Cor.* 12. Though the Stars differ from one another in glory, yet they agree in this, that they are all of them Starr. The Fathers, the Young-men, the little Children, and the Babes alſo have this in common, that they are of Gods Family, and of the houſhold of Faith, the ſons of God; they are all in Chriſts School, though not all of one Form.

4. As there is ſomething common to all, ſo there are ſome things proper and peculiar to each ſtate; ſomething proper to the Fathers, which cannot be ſaid of the young-men; ſomething proper to the young-men, which cannot be ſaid of the little Children; ſomething proper to the little Children, which cannot be ſaid

of

of the Babes; as there is something proper to the Babes which cannot be said of them that are not yet new-born; though there be too much in common with Babes and carnal men, they being not yet throughly cleansed from their blood and pollution, but are *as* carnal, and walk as men. There is something in the best Saints that may be found in every one, but there is that in some that cannot be found in all. The Apostle gives these three Classes peculiar attributes; That of Fathers is Wisdom, that of young men is Valour, that of little Children is Love; and St. *Paul* tells us that the Babes eat but milk, *i. e.* they repent and believe (a little faintly) *&c.* to which St. *Peter* adds desires, as was noted before from 1 *Pet.* 2. 2. 'Tis true indeed the highest and greatest contains the less, but not the less the greater, much less the greatest. The Father knows all the four states, for he hath past from a Babe to a little Child, from a little Child to a young man, and from thence to a Father. The young man knows three states, for he past from a Babe to a little Child, and from thence to a young man; the little Child knows but two states, being gone no further than from a Babe to a little Child; but the Babe is acquainted with only his own state (at present) and knows not what 'tis to be any thing of what is proper to the other three; only this, he is past from death to life, from being a sinner to be a Saint, though but a weak one. Of their several attainments and proper Characters I shall treat hereafter more particularly, if God permit, *Heb.* 6. 3.

5 The

5. The disparity or difference that is between those Saints (as such) is not in their gifts but graces; and not in common but in special grace: No, not only in accessaries and complemental, but in principal and fundamental graces, proper to each state. 'Tis not in their gifts but graces, for 'tis possible for persons to be full of and rich in gifts, yet poor in grace, as the *Corinthians* were, they came behind in no gift, 1 *Ephes.* 1. 7. they were full, they were rich, they reigned as Kings; they were wise, strong, and honourable (at least in their own if not others esteem) 1 *Ephes.* 4. 8, and 10. and yet were but Babes and as carnal, 1 *Ephes.* 3. 1. And therefore the Apostle shews them a more excellent way than that of gifts, *viz.* grace, and in special the grace of Love, 1 *Ephes.* 12. 31. and 13. 1,---3. *Apollo* was a man very eloquent, mighty in the Scriptures, and being instructed in the way of the Lord, was fervent in Spirit, and taught zealously, diligently and boldly, yet needed to have the way of God expounded to him more perfectly, *Acts* 18. 24,---26. And this was done not only by a man, *Aquila*, but a woman *Priscilla*; *Apollo* was a man in parts, but a woman (it seems) was more a man in grace. The *Corinthians* that came behind in no gift, yet came behind in and fell short of many a grace. So that the measure of a mans excellency is not to be taken by what gifts of knowledge and eloquence he hath, but by what grace he acts.

Again, this measure is not to be taken from common, but from special and saving grace; not

not from profession but practice. There is common Faith, and the Faith of Gods Elect; there were foolish as well as wise Virgins; are seeming as well as truly religious persons; the stony ground hearers made a fair shew in the flesh; and the thorny brought forth fruit, but not to perfection: Which is an argument that they knew not the root of the matter, or the grace of God in truth, for that brings forth ripe fruit, *Col.* 1. 6. There were some that through the knowledge of Christ had escaped the pollutions of the world, yet licked up their vomit (and therefore their nature was not changed, but they were Dogs still) and wallowed again in the mire, and therefore though they were washed, yet were Sows still, and not really converted so as to have a saving work upon them, 2 *Pet.* 2. 20,---22. *Surely*, saith the Apostle, *they that went out from us, were not of us* (but a bastardly brood) 1 *Joh.* 2. 19. where he speaks of *them* as distinguished from the [*us*] which word [*us*] he mentions five times by way of distinction, and the word [*they*] six times in that one Verse.

Yet again, the measure is not to be taken from accessary graces, which conduce chiefly to the well-being, the comforts and refreshment (or if I may so speak) the recreation of Christians, as Joy, Ecstatic, Rapture, *&c.* but from the graces which are essential and proper to each state; as wisdom and much experience is for Fathers; strength and the Word abiding for young men; Love for Children; and repentance, *&c.* for Babes. Now as any person doth

doth act the substantial and fundamental graces of any state, such is his denomination; and as he passeth from one to another, such is his advance and preferment.

6. As this difference is to be measured by graces wrought and acted, so 'tis made by the grace of God working and actuating these graces in us. 'Tis grace that makes the difference not only between Saints and sinners, but between Saints and Saints: that it makes it between men and men in taking one and making him a Saint, and leaving the other in his sins, is clear from *Matth.* 11. 25. *Rom.* 9. 13,---16. and *ver.* 21,---24. with many other places. And 'tis as clear that grace and the good pleasure of God makes the difference between Saints also, that the one hath more grace and improveth grace more than another, 1 *Cor.* 4. 7. and 12. 11,---18. Indeed, God worketh all things according to (no counsel but) the counsel of his Will, and who shall say to him, Why hast thou made me thus? His wind bloweth, as where, so how, it listeth; and as he sheweth mercy to whom he pleaseth, so 'tis what and how much he pleaseth; the first and the after increase is of God: he gives five Talents to one, two to another, and but one to a third; and 'tis not the man but the Talent that brings in the gain, as the Apostle, when he had said, *I live*, corrects himself with *a not I, but Christ liveth in me, and my life is by Faith*, Gal. 2. 20. And when he had said, *He laboured more abundantly than they all*, he seems to recall it, and saith, *Not I but the grace of*

God

God which was bestowed upon me, and was with me, viz. to assist and enable me, 1 *Cor.* 15. 10. *Luke* 19. 16. And 'tis observable how *Paul* alters his language, when he speaks of what he did in a state of nature, and what he did in a state of grace: then he attributes all to himself, I *was* this, and I *did* this, (he was always a great proficient) *I profited more in the Jews religion, than many of my contemporaries that were of my standing*, Gal. 1. 14. But when he is converted, though he laboured more than any, and outwent his Seniors, yet he is not arrogant and assuming, but modest and thankful, *Not I, but the grace of God that was with me*, q. d. Though by nature I was forward and zealous, yet as to this work and labour, I have reason to attribute it and pay my gratitudes not to nature but to grace.

Well then, as 'tis of grace that one is taken and another left, so 'tis of grace that one is promoted and advanced more than another; that *John* lyeth in his bosome; that *Paul* grows so fast, that he increaseth with the increase of God, is of God, and of the grace of God; that one should be a Father, and another, who it may be, was in Christ before him, should be but a Babe still, is of grace. One would think wise men should know most, yet by grace Babes are wiser, *Matth.* 11. 25. That strong men should do most, and yet the weak do more, 1 *Cor.* 1. 25,---31. That the Children of the Kingdom should not enter, but Publicans and Harlots should, is a difference of graces making. And when in the Body, that this should be an Eye, that an Ear, this an Hand,

Hand, that but a Foot, is becauſe God hath ſet the members in the Body, every one as it pleaſed him. That this is a Babe and but a Babe (and ſo of the reſt) 'tis even ſo Father for it ſeemeth good in thy ſight, 'tis thy Will and pleaſure it ſhould be ſo. And yet beſide this,

7. God hath great and glorious ends in having people of ſeveral ſizes and degrees in his Church, ſeveral members in the Body, and ſeveral Claſſes and Forms in the School of Chriſt. Though God be not bound to give an account of any of his matters, yet he is pleaſed to be ſo condeſcending as to vouchſafe to do it. As every thing is beautiful in its ſeaſon, ſo in its place. When God was about to erect the material temple, he made men and things fit on purpoſe; there were Stones and Timber as well as Gold, and Veſſels of ſeveral ſorts and ſizes; ſome men wrought in Gold, ſome in purple and blew; ſome had one office and employment and ſome another. So when he erected a ſpiritual * houſe and building (his Church, the 1 Pet
Body of Chriſt) he did, and continueth to do the like, but far more glorioufly, that as then ſo now, every one may ſpeak of his glory, or (as 'tis in the Margent) every whit may utter glory, *viz.* to him, to whom 'tis due, *Pſal.* 29. 9. To this the Apoſtle alludes, when he ſaith, *Epheſ.* 2. 21. *In whom*, i. e. in Chriſt Jeſus the whole building fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy Temple in the Lord. So *Col.* 2. 19. *From the Head*, viz. Chriſt, all the Body by joynts and bands having nouriſhment

miniſtred, and knit together, increaſeth with the increaſe of God. And more fully, *Eph.* 4. 16. *From whom* (the head——Chriſt) the whole body fitly joyned together and compacted, by that which *every joynt* ſupplieth, according to the effectual working in the meaſure of *every part*, maketh increaſe of the Body to the edifying of it ſelf in Love. By all which we ſee with what curioſity and exactneſs of Art (may I ſo ſpeak) God hath ordered every part in relation to the beauty and perfection of the whole: Here is Beauty, Harmony, Communion, Edification, all met together.

The more pieces there are in any work drawn into an union, the more admirable is that work. When the Queen of *Sheba* ſaw the Houſe that *Solomon* had built, *&c.* there was no more ſpirit in her, ſhe was rapt with admiration, 1 *King.* 10. 4, 5. Much more is it matter of tranſport to ſee the variety and unity of the Houſe of God! This made the firſt workmanſhip of God ſo glorious, that he brought together and united ſo many Atoms of duſt into the Body of a man; to frame ſuch a curious piece out of duſt, was worthy of a behold and wonder. And 'tis no leſs a beauty that's drawn by God himſelf, but a far greater in the ſecond Creation; eſpecially as to the whole Body myſtical, made up of ſuch different Members, as
1 Cor. 12. 20. Fathers, Young men, little Children, and Babes, all united to ſo glorious an Head, as Chriſt is, and called his fulneſs. That in Muſick ſo many ſeveral ſounds ſhould melt into one; and in Painting ſo many lines and colours ſhould

ſhould conſpire to make one Face, is admired even by Artiſts; but alas! what's Art to Nature? and what's Nature to Grace? What Body was ever like to the Body of Chriſt, ſo fitly framed together? But,

In 1 *Cor.* 12. the Apoſtle gives us a more particular account of Gods deſign herein and tells us that there is not one unneceſſary member, no not the moſt feeble, 1 *Cor.* 12. 22. And if theſe have ſuch abundant honour beſtowed upon them, what is the honor of the comely parts that have *no need?* Verſ. 23. *No need?* what though they need not what the other parts do, yet have they no need of one another? Yes ſurely, for God hath ſo tempered the Body, and hath ſo ſet the Members, *That the Eye cannot ſay to the Hand, I have no need of thee*; Nor the Head to the Feet (Oh ſtange!) I have no need of you, *Verſ.* 21. There is as much need of the Foot as the Hand, of the Ear as the Eye, and of the Smelling as of Seeing and Hearing, (*Verſ.* 15, 16, 17.) to make the Body compleat, for if there were but one ſort of members, it were no body, *Verſ.* 19. But what's the end of all this variety and diſparity? 'tis *Verſ.* 25, 26. that there ſhould be no ſchiſm or diviſion in the body; but that the members ſhould have the ſame care one of another (as if it were for themſelves, *Heb.* 13. 3. as if the caſe were your own, for ſo it may be) and that if one member ſuffer, all the members may ſuffer with it, or one member be honoured, all the reſt may rejoyce with it. There is ſuch a mutual aſſiſtance reſulting from this united variety, that

'tis far better not only for the whole, but for each one, than if they were every one for themselves (as the world is) and were to be concerned for none else. Wo to him that is alone without the Society and Sympathy of others; but what an hapifying communion do the Babes desires, the little Childrens love, the Youngmens strength, and the Fathers wisdom, I say what an happifying communion do these make in relation to one another! And that these may the better contribute to each other, God embodies them, as 1 *Cor.* 12. 27. it there follows.

What alas! should the weak do, were there not some stronger to bear their infirmities? *Rom.* 15. 1. What should an overtaken one do, if there were not some spiritual ones to restore him, and set him in joynt again with (a Ladies hand, yea with) a spirit of meekness? *Gal.* 6. 1. And this they are obliged to do as if they were in their stead and condition, considering themselves, that either they have been, or may be tempted, and therefore should bear one anothers burden. Yea, I may add also what would the elder sort do with all their strength and knowledge, if there were not others to be strengthned and taught by them, for *scire tuum nihil est nisi te sciré hoc sciat alter*, the good of knowledge and experience is not only in being possessed of it, but in communicating it: the design of such mens having more grace than others is not only for their own salvation (less would do that) but for others edification also, as gifts so great degrees of grace are given εἰς τὸ

σύμφερον

σύμφερον for a common good. As *Paul* was converted not meerly to save him, but that he might be an example to them that should believe hereafter, 1 *Tim.* 1. So in his tribulations and temptations he was comforted, not only for his own support, but for the consolation and salvation of others, that he might be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith he was comforted of God, 2 *Cor.* 1. 3,——6. in which exercise he was not a little conversant, 2 *Cor.* 11. 28, 29.

Thus then you see that this body is so compact that the communion between the members is lively, sympathizing and assistant, as if it were every ones own case. This indeed is the excellency of this great piece of Gods work, that all the members are so joynted, that if you touch one all the rest feel it, and have a sense of it, as the Head also hath if any of his members be abused, *Acts* 9. 4 5. There are many carved and other painted pieces that please the Eye to look upon them, but have no life nor sense, if you touch one part, the rest are not concerned; but in this body, they rejoyce together and suffer together according to the good or evil any members meet withal. If but a Toe be trodden on, the Head feels it, and cries out, *Saul, Saul why persecutest thou me?* If *Peter* be in Prison, the Church is at Prayers: the members of this body are partners in joy and sorrow; if they laugh, 'tis together; if they weep, 'tis together, like twins in one. As each member contributes to the making up and edification of the whole, *Ephes.* 4. 16. So each partakers of

the enjoyments or ſufferings of the whole or any part. And to this purpoſe God hath framed (thus harmoniouſly and admirably) this body, made up of theſe members, Babes, little Children, Young men and Fathers, all of whom are neceſſary and aſſiſtant to the edification and perfection of the whole Structure.

III. *A further continuation of the* Præcognita, *things to be premiſed.*

8. ALL theſe ranks and ſtates, and each of them have a meaſure to which they are appointed and a degree wherein they are fixed. The Foot is fixed to its place and meaſure, ſo are the reſt of the members; ſo 'tis in this body (though with this difference that ſome, who yet are Babes, may be little Children and ſo go on from degee to degree, yet) there is conſtantly theſe fixed ſtates of Babes, Children, &c. ſo that they who are appointed to be but Babes, go no higher; and ſo of Children, that come not to be young men; and Young men that come not to be Fathers. Though I cannot ſay, this or that perſon is fixed to be a Babe, a little Child, &c. and ſhall be no other; yet I can ſay that the ſtate of a Babe, &c. is fixed, and that they who are appointed thereunto proceed no further. Some die young, as *Jeroboams* Son, who run his race as ſoon as he could go almoſt. The Thief on the Croſs died almoſt in the moment (or hour)

hour) wherein he was new born, and yet might have more grace (and be of an higher degree) than ſome that were converted before him, and lived longer after it. God ſaith in this caſe as to the Sea, *Thus far ſhalt thou go and no further*: As he appoints the times and habitations, ſo their eſtates and riches to, which (as 'tis ſaid of their daies) they cannot paſs. There is the meaſure of every part, *Epheſ.* 4.16. and the meaſure of the Stature, *Verſ.* 12. and of the gift of Chriſt, *Verſ.* 7. of Faith, *Rom.* 2.3. And as God hath appointed who ſhall be members, ſo alſo what growth each of theſe members ſhall attain to, for they increaſe with the increaſe of God, *viz.* of his appointment as well as bleſſing and production, *Col.* 2. 19. as all Chriſts members were written in Gods Book, ſo the growth of them to; they are not to be all of the ſame ſtature, but according to the meaſure, that is allotted to them: ſome live and die Babes, *&c.*

9. Every one ſhall have grace ſuitable and ſufficient to his ſtate and degree: The Father for his, the Young man for his, and ſo of the reſt. God will feed them all with the food of their allowance, or food convenient for them, to allude to that of *Agur*, *Prov* 30. 8. A Babe ſhall have Babes grace, Babes food and rayment, Babes allowance and portion, and ſo ſhall all the reſt have what is ſuitable to and ſufficient for them. That which will fit and ſuffice one, will not another, but the God of all grace (of all ſorts and degrees) will fit and furniſh them all. As our Fathers according to the fleſh diſpoſe of

and to their Children according to their age and capacity, so doth the Father of spirits his Children.

Mat.25.15. *As to Talents*, The Lord gave to every man according to his ability, or faculty, as *Erasmus*, or as Dr. *Hammond* in his Paraphrase, what was competent for that employment, place, office, exigence of business intrusted to him, and agreeable to his capacity. *In case of temptation*, he will not suffer them to be tempted above that they are able, 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. *In case of duties*, he lays on them nothing but what is necessary (to their state and condition) *Act.* 15. 28. Our Saviour would not put new Wine into old Bottles, *i. e.* he would not put his Disciples on Fasting, which was at that time a duty too hard for them, *Matth* 9. 15,—17. He would not lay mens duties on Babes or Children; no, he hath a special tenderness for his little ones, he (as *Jacob* did his) drives them gently, as they can go, as he doth also them that are with young, and if his Lambs faint, he takes them into his bosom, *Isa.* 40. 11. He doth not (as the Pharisees) bind heavy burdens, or if he do, he will put to his helping hand. God keeps a good Table, he hath several Dishes; Milk for Babes, and strong meat for grown persons: And in the first place he takes care that *Peter* feed his Lambs, and then his Sheep, *Joh.* 21. The Mother forgets not her sucking Child to be sure, though she doth not neglect the rest; the weak little ones shall be made much of, and have the breast or the spoon often, because they cannot digest much at a time; that I may allude

ude to that in *Isa.* 28. 9, 10. Precept shall be upon Precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little. God will give all their portion in due season, and divide his Word aright among them, they shall have suitable dividends. He will give the tongue of the learned to one or other, that he shall know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary (*Matth.* 11. 28.) and to others also, as *John* did to Fathers, Young men and Children. He will not break the bruised Reed, nor quench the smoaking Flax, but support that and cherish this; he will not cocker the wantons, but use the Rod, as well as rebuke them sharply, that they may be found in the Faith. Still as their case and condition is, such is the administration to them. Isa. 50. 4.

Our Saviour would not say more to his Disciples than they could bear, *Joh.* 16. 12. and so he hath taught his Apostles to tread in his steps; when *Paul* found the *Corinthians* to be but Babes, he speaks to and treats them accordingly, 1 *Cor.* 3. 1, 2. And so he did the *Hebrews*, Chap. 5. who were dull of hearing. 'Tis to do hurt and not good, to Preach to persons otherwise than their capacities are. There is a time for all things, *Non omnibus omnia, nec omnibus horis*, every thing is beautiful in its season; sometimes new and sometimes old things must be brought out of the treasury; sometimes promises, othertimes threatnings; that is best which is fittest and most agreeable: *We must not study what we can best Preach, but what the people can best bear*; we must not teach Mark 4.

a Babe,

a Babe, as we would a Child or a Young man: A word fitly spoken is like Apples of God in Pictures of Silver, *i. e.* both inviting and taking, being lovely and desireable, because both pleasing and profitable.

What ever we do, to be sure God doth feed his people with food convenient for them, giving every one their portion suitably, which is the beauty of it. He knows what every one needs, and will supply it: The grace that *Paul* had already received might have been sufficient for others, yea for himself perhaps in another case, but being buffeted by Satan he needed more; and accordingly God told him, *My grace shall be sufficient for thee*, q. d. I will give thee more strength than thou yet hast; for so *Paul* understands it, 1 *Cor.* 12. 9, 10. and accordingly rejoyceth at it. If thou be a Babe he will feed thee (though it be but with Milk) and thou shalt not lack what's fittest for thee: if thou be a little Child he will smile on thee and shew thee his love: if thou be a Young man he will strengthen thee, and thou shalt overcome the wicked one; if thou be a Father, he will rub up thy memory, and cause thee to remember, and tell others the stories of what acquaintance thou hast had with him that is from the beginning. If thy work be great, and temptations strong, he will not be an *Ægyptian* task-master to thee, but will enable thee with strength in thy Soul. If thou be but a weakling, yet he will uphold and succour thee: what ever thy state be, his grace shall be sufficient for thee.

10. 'Tis

10. 'Tis seldom that any of these (unless the Fathers) be eminent in the exercise of all graces, at least all alike: Though every grace be seminally and radically in every one, yet they do not spring up and grow in all alike. 'Tis certain the Class is of Babes is not eminent in any grace, no not in them which are their proper Acts, and by which they are denominated; their repentance, desire, and faith is imperfect and weak, though true: The little children are for Love, and live the less by faith, because they live by a sensible knowledge of (the love of) the Father: The Young men are strong, *viz.* in Faith: The Fathers have gone through all these and are filled with assurance and the riches of its joy.

There have been some persons eminent in some special graces, as *Abraham* for Faith, *Job* for patience, *Moses* for meekness, but few that have been eminent in all grace, which argues that there are but few in the uppermost Form (the Class is of Fathers) in the School of Christ. *All have grace in some degree, but few have all grace in an high degree.* As 'tis in gifts, 'tis in graces also many times, 1 *Cor.* 12.8.---18.--28. Some excell in one thing and some in another: The highest estate is the Fathers; the next the Young men, and so downward; now the lower the Form, the less and lower is the grace: and I fear that many who pretend high (perhaps so high as to be above all Forms) will be found to be as low as Babes, and that they need to learn their very Alphabet again. But,

11. Some (*viz.* such as are appointed to pass

pass and proceed from one state to another; grow up faster than others: some that shall be Children, Young men, &c. are not so, so soon as others. 'Tis not here as in our University degrees, where at such a time, after such a standing persons may Commence, though not of equal learning and proficiency, and be called Masters of Arts, though they be Master of none, and Doctor of Divinity, though they be yet to learn it: No, 'tis not so here, God gives not his grace as men do. Some grow up suddenly, *per saltum*. Others by degrees and more leisurely. *Paul* starts up in a trice, and is so great a proficient, that he hath the right hand given him by *James*, *Cephas*, and *John*, to do more than allude to *Gal.* 2. 9. the *Thessalonians* grew exceedingly, beyond expectation, 2 *Thes.* 1. 3, 4. Others come on more slowly (like some Grain) first the Blade, then the Ear, then the full Corn in the Ear, *Mark* 4. 18. As some are long in travail, and have hard labour ere they be delivered: so some are long at the breast before they are weaned, and 'tis a great while before they can go or speak. Time is required to the most, as the Apostle hints, *Heb.* 5. 12. But some shoot up and become men in a far less time than others do.

The reason of this in general is from the distinguishing grace of God, who causes the increase of some to be more expeditious than others: all increase and fruit is from him; but some he blesseth more abundantly, waters them every moment, pours out much of his Spirit upon them at the very beginning, more than

others

others have all their life long, as was the case of *Paul*, who had a huge flock bestowed upon him at the very first. So he that had five Talents at the first had more, than he that had four by improvement after a long time; such get the start so much at first that others cannot overtake them by all their industry. God gives what and how much he pleaseth. Yet usually he doth this when such men are appointed to great undertakings and sufferings as *Paul* was, which was told him at his first Conversion, and as the reason why he was so filled with the Holy Ghost, *Acts* 9. 15, 16, 17. which was accordingly done and forthwith to the amazement of them that heard him, *Vers.* 20, 21. and on a sudden he increased the more in strength, *Vers.* 12. or else, when such persons have not only much work to do, but a little time to do it in (being newly called & converted) as they that came late into the Vineyard, but (it seems) wrought as much as, and it may be better than, them that came in before them. And perhaps it was so with the Thief on the Cross, for he acted a great deal of grace in that little time, and had not only hopes but assurance too of being with Christ in Paradise. So when great things do suffer, God fills them full, as 'twere, at first, as *Stephen* was, *Act.* 6. 5. who suffered death in a little time after, *chap.* 7.

12. But though some upon these accounts grow faster than others, and are Fathers sooner than others that were born before them, yet each of them shall sooner or later grow up to that

that measure of the stature of Christ to which they are appointed. The Babe that is to be a Child by appointment, shall be so by attainment, and so of the rest. No Saint shall die till he have attained the utmost of what he was designed to. As none of Gods Elect (I speak *de adultis* of them come to years) die before they are converted, so no converted ones die till they come to their maturity and be ripe (like a shock of Corn) for the Garner of God. *God gathers none but ripe fruit*, though some be riper sooner than other, and as I may say, some be Summer and others Winter fruit, some die young and others old, yet there shall not be an Infant of daies, nor an old man that hath not fulfilled his years, but every one shall attain to his full stature, *Isa.* 65. 20. Our Saviour could not, as he told that Fox, be perfected till he had finished his work; and then his hour came, *Luk.* 13. 32, 33. When any of the Saints (like him) have glorified God on Earth by finishing the work God hath given him to do (and every one hath his task set him, and his work cut out to his hands, *Eccl.* 9. 10) then shall he go to be glorified, as Christ did, *Joh.* 17. 4, 5. as he could not die till then, so he then would not but die.

David was a man of a publick spirit, and served his Generation according to the Will of God; and what then? why then he fell asleep; when his work was done he went to bed, to rest in the bosom of God, *Acts* 13. 36. though his body saw corruption, which Christs Body (who was without sin) did not see. Indeed *David* thought

thought to have done more work (*viz.* to build the Temple) but that was reserved for another, and therefore having done his devoir, he fell asleep. So it was with *Paul*, when the time of his departure was at hand, he was ready to be offered, for saith he, 2 *Tim.* 4. 6, —8. *I have finished my course*, I have run to the end of my race, I have nothing to do but to die. So the reverend good old man (*Simeon*) could not die till he had seen (and could not but die when he had seen) the Salvation of God. This then is the thing in hand, that God (having begun a good work) will finish it before he take any of his converted ones out of this world: he will bring them to their appointed stature: it may be some may die in the good old age of Fathers; others while Young men in their prime, their marrow in their bones, after great and glorious atchievements and victories; others in their Child-hood, while their love is fervent and strong; and others in their Babe-state with the milk in their mouth: but every one (before the time of his departure come) shall finish that work which was appointed for him to do.

13. 'Tis necessary (to avoid scruples and objections) that I premise this also; these states are not so constantly fixed and immutable, but that sometimes for a season there may be a variation: A Babe may have a Spring-tide now and then, but he ebbs again quickly, and comes to low-water mark again. The Child of Light and Love may walk in darkness; God may so hide his face, that the Child may not know his Father.

ther. The Young man conqueror may be buffeted again, and perhaps led captive and made a prisoner to a temptation; a fit of forgetfulness or sickness may befal a Father, and make him forgetful, that he may seem to be a Child again; but these intermissions (rising of the low, and fallings of the high) do not alter their state; No, God measures none by particular acts or cases, but according to the tenour and constant course of their frames and exercises. The *Corinthians* made a great shew, kept a great deal ado, yet were Babes: *Paul* himself was buffeted, because apt to be puffed up; prayed thrice before he had any Answer, and yet he was a Father, even at that time. There may be some unevenness in the high and low and yet no alteration of their states.

The Church of *Ephesus*, her love and works were more at first, than when our Saviour sent her that Epistle; and the Church of *Thyatira* her works more at last than at first; yet we cannot conclude from the partial decay of the former, or advance of the latter, which was best at last, for that might repent, and this not hold fast, which were the duties called for; that from *Ephesus*, and this from *Thyatira*: but this we may clearly see, that great beginnings of zeal may be intermitted and decay; and on the other hand that small beginnings may increase to more and more godliness. Some persons run without weariness, and walk without faintness, grow without intermission, they meet with no rubs nor lets, they are not nipt in the bud, and put back by an hard season, as some

others

others are. 'Tis said of the *Colossians*, that from the very day they heard of the Gospel and knew the grace of God in truth, that they brought forth fruit, *Col.* 1. 6. there was no decay but a growth; but the *Hebrews* they (like the idle servant) stood still at a stay, and were Heb. 5. but Babes for a long time; and indeed they met with many a stumbling block in their way, which the Apostle indeavoured to remove in that Epistle, that they (if yet at last) might go on to perfection. There is a great variety in these things, the first last, and the last first very often; the younger born is the elder grown in grace. No man can conclude infallibly as to particular persons, what their estate is at present, or shall be for the future: which brings me to a

14. Premise, seeing no man knows nor any man can tell him what he is appointed to, every one should aim at and propound to himself to attain the highest state; as many a common Souldier doth to be a Captain; many a young Student to be a Master; and many an Apprentice to be not only a free-man, or Common-council man, but an Alderman. This I speak that none may be idle or negligent, but pursue after perfection: Great things have been attempted upon a peradventure, and an *it may be*. If thou be but a Babe at present, and hast been so for many years, yet who knows but thou maist be a Father at last? Let none therefore say, I have heard, prayed and waited so long, and yet I see no more comes than did at first, therefore I will take up with this flint which I have; Oh let none say so, for who knows but that af-

tes you have been planted in the House of the Lord and become well rooted & grounded, you may flourish as the Palm-tree, & grow up as the Cedars in *Lebanon*, you may be fat and flourishing, and shall bring forth more fruit in your old age than you did in your youth, *Psal.* 92. 12,——14. If God water thee with the dew of his blessing, thou wilt not only blossom as the Lilly, but cast forth thy roots as *Lebanon*, thy branches and beauty shall spread and be as the Olive-tree, *Hos.* 14. 5, 6. The cloud that was at first but as an hand-breadth did at last cover the face of the Heavens and there was an abundance of rain, 1 *King.* 18. 44, 45. The water that was at first but to the ankles, ascended to the Knees, and thence upward to the Loins, at last it was a river to swim in and not fordable, it rose so high, *Ezek.* 47. 3,——5. The Mustard-seed is but little, yet grows to a great Tree: So are the workings of Grace in many a Soul growing up more and more to perfection. Many a man that began with little, yet being faithful and industrious hath become master of a great estate. Do not despond because great things are difficult and thou art but little in *Israel*, who knows what he may come to? therefore press forward. Our degrees (like times and seasons) are in the Fathers power, and are hid from us but to make us the more watchful and industrious. If thou have a mind to know the way and means of growing rich, then,

15. And lastly, I premise this, that God usually builds us up by that which he brought us in by, *viz.* his Word and Spirit. *Nutrimur*

ex iisdem è quibus constituimur. While we behold the glory of the Lord in the Gospel glass, we are transformed into its Image from glory to glory by the spirit of the Lord, 2 *Cor.* 3. 18. The same Spirit that convinceth of sin, doth convince of righteousness yea of judgement and victory too, *Joh.* 16. 8. The gifts given to Pastors and Teachers as well as those given to Apostles, *&c.* are for the perfecting of the Saints, the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to a perfect man, *i. e.* to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, *Ephes.* 4. 13. Now that every part of the Body hath a several measure is clear, *Vers.* 16. But the Gospel and the gifts of Ministers are left to carry on this measure and perfect it in every one, till all come to make up the whole body compleat, which body is the fulness of Christ, who filleth all in all, *i. e.* supplies what every part hath, *Ephes.* 1. 23. The Apostle tells *Timothy* how useful the Word is to make every man of God perfect, for 'tis profitable for four things, which haply may refer to these four states; for surely 'twas not only to make the Preaching, but the hearing men of God perfect, 2 *Tim.* 3. 16, 17. 'Tis profitable for Doctrine, to teach even Fathers themselves; for reproof of young men if rash and proud; for correction of little Children if wanton; for instruction in righteousness, which refers to Babes, of whom it is expressly said, that they are unskilful in the word of righteousness, *Heb.* 5. 13. *We are born again not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for*

ever; and this is the Word which by the Gospel is preached unto you, 1 Pet. 1. 23,—25. and it follows, *Chap.* 2. 1, 2. *Wherefore laying aside,* &c. *As new-born Babes desire the sincere milk of the Word that you may grow thereby.* God brings us in and builds us up by his Word. And this I hint that the Preaching of the Gospel may not be despicable in any of your eyes, as if when a man were once converted or had attained to some degree of Grace, he were past hearing; Oh no, you see plainly that that by which he begets us, he brings us up by, we grow by the Word as well as we are begotten by it: and 'tis not till one or two, but till we all come (every one) to our perfect stature, so that the whole body and every member is perfect and intire lacking nothing, as to its proper complement.

Having thus endeavoured to clear my way, I shall now, God willing and enabling, proceed to treat of the several Classes and Forms in their order, from the several scriptures which are to be found speaking on these Subjects; of which sort I hope to find more than are ordinarily thought of, this being a Subject that I never yet met with handled distinctly, or conjunctly by any person.

The

The FIRST CLASSIS or FORM OF BABES.

From 1 *Cor.* 3. 1, 2. and *Heb.* 5 11,——13, &c.

In relation to these I shall proceed in this Method, and shew first that there is such a Classis, Form (or state of Saints) as this of Babes, below that of (παιδία) little Children. 2. I shall shew what their attainments (and therein what their characters) are. 3. Wherein they are (as carnal, and) defective, more than any of the other sorts are. And 4. What use is to be made of this in relation to them without and them within.

I. *That there is such a state.*

THE word *Babe* is used sometimes in a natural, and other times in a Metaphorical sense : in a Natural sense, and thus, 1. A Child in the Womb is called (βρέφος) a Babe, as *Luke* 1. 44. *The Babe leapt in my Womb for joy.* 2. A Child new-born is called a Babe, as was

In *Hesychius* βρέφος ἐμβρύον, νήπιος, παῖς, syno and νήπιος, νεα τερος, μ κρὸς.

our Saviour once, *Luke* 2. 12. and 16. *Ye shall find the Babe wrapt in swadling cloaths.* 3. 'Tis used also to denote children grown up (as I may say) to Boys and Girls, so in *Matth.* 21. 16. *Out of the mouths of Babes and Sucklings, thou hast perfected praise*: and though the word there used for Babes be (νήπια, which Etymologists derive from (τὸ εἰπεῖν ἃ non fando) because they cannot speak) a word that often signifies one that cannot speak, and is joyn'd with Sucklings which are usually such; yet these were speaking and praising Babes, for they cryed *Hosannah* to the Son of *David*, and are called (παῖδες) Children, *Vers.* 15. Lastly, 'Tis used indefinitely for Children (of any under age) that survive their Parents (*Psal.* 17. 14. they leave the rest to their Babes) such as we call Orphans.

In *Hych.* νήπιος, ἀνόητος, ἄφρων, νηπιάζω, ἀφραίνω.

2. The word *Babe* is used (when applyed to Morals) in a Metaphorical sense, and that first by way of commendation, and excellency, as 1 *Cor.* 14. 20. *Brethren, be not Children in understanding*, but in malice (or in evil) be ye Children (νηπιάζετε) be ye Babes, *but in understanding be men* (τέλειοι) perfect. Thus to be Babes, as to unacquaintedness with evil, were an excellency worthy of our ambition. *Secondly*, *Babe* is used by way of diminution, derogation and disparagement, to set out the defectiveness of persons in understanding and other attainments, *Isa* 3. 4. opposed to them in *Vers.* 2, 3. so 'tis opposed to men, or being perfect in understanding, 1 *Cor.* 13. 11. and 14. 20. and joyned with foolish, *Rom.* 2. 20.

'Tis

'Tis all one as to be (a Servant) in bondage to the rudiments of the world, opposed to the adoption of Sons, or having the spirit of Sons, *Gal.* 4. 1, —— 6. it notes unsteadiness and instability, such are tossed to and fro, *Eph.* 4. 14. In which places the word should be translated Babes and not Children, as sometimes 'tis. It notes an ignorance or unskilfulness, *Heb.* 5. 13. opposed to them who have their senses exercised to distinguish and discern things, and consequently to approve of what is best.

'Tis in this last Metaphorical and Moral sense that I am to speak of Babes, and by the way 'tis, perhaps, not unworthy of observation, that in the Metaphorical sense βρέφος is but once used (as I remember) and that by St. *Peter*, 1 *Ephes.* 2. 2. but νήπιος is the word so frequently used by St. *Paul*; though by both they mean the same state of persons, as appears by the *Milk* which both mention when they speak of these Babes. Now that these metaphorical Babes (be they young or old for years) are a sort of professors inferiour to, and of a lower rank than, the παιδία, little Children which St. *John* speaks to, I evince not only from the different words used, and that so frequently * (which is not inconsiderable) but from the characters and proper attainments of the one and the other state, which is the best proof, and indeed, such as is undeniable and cannot be gain-sayed.

The word (παιδία) which in *John* is rendred little Children, is once used by *Paul* to denote want or weakness of understanding,

1 Cor. 14. 20. My Brethren, be not Children in underſtanding; that therefore it cannot be meant in that place of theſe little Children which *John* ſpeaks of is clear as the Sun, for this is the excellency which *John* attributes to them, *that they know the Father*, they are called little Children from knowledge, which notes an underſtanding that amounts to aſſurance; but Babes (conſidered in nature or in grace) know not their Father: ſo that from this very character 'tis apparent that the ſtate or rank of Babes is below that of little Children, theſe are Sons and know it, but Babes (though they be, yet) know not, *i. e.* have not the aſſurance that they are ſo: though they have the things that do aſſure, yet they have not (for want of light) either the aſſurance of the things, or aſſurance by them: but are in this ſenſe ἀδόκιμοι, not reprobates (as we read it) but without proof, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks to the *Corinthian* Babes, 2 Cor. 13. 5. They ſought a proof of *Paul's* Apoſtleſhip, and he requires a proof of their Converſion, but they were leſs able to prove this, than he was able to prove that, as *Verſ.* 6. He was not (ἀδόκιμος) but they were (ἀδόκιμοι) without proof. So that though they had grace, yet it was ſo weak in its actings & operations that it afforded them no aſſurance, as ſtrong and vigorous grace uſeth to do.

The Star-light of their grace is not clear enough in Babes to diſcern their converſation by it; and many times 'tis clouded too, that the Stars do not appear: and though grace live in their hearts, yet the light and comfort of it

may

ay be wanting; for though every man having he power of reflecting upon his own actions, an discern what thoughts are in him and what ffections, and can tell what he loves, what he ars and grieves for, and the like; yet he ay ſtill be queſtioning and doubting whether is his love, fear, grief, &c. be gracious, ſpiritual, and truly holy actings or not: whereof he reaſon is this, becauſe though the Spirit hich is in a man knows the things of a man, *Cor.* 2. 11. Yet what is the true worth of heſe things which are in him, and whether iven him of God, and wrought in him by od unto Salvation, this we cannot know but y a ſupervening light of the Spirit, who is ot only the worker of Grace in us, but is given s to diſcover and enlighten it to us, *Verſ.* 12. Now without this light or Teſtimony of the pirit (which the little Children have, but Babes have not) 'tis with them as with the natural man, who knows not the things of the pirit, *Verſ.* 14. Whereas the ſpiritual man udgeth all things wrought in him by the Spirit y the light thereof: Now Babes not being ſpiritual (but as carnal) 1 *Cor.* 3. 1. the Apoſtle could not write of ſuch things as he did to he ſpiritual, *chap.* 2. 13. but was fain to feed hem with milk (like Babes as they were) for hey were not able (as the ſpiritual were) to bear meat, *viz.* ſtrong meat, having weak ſtomachs, *chap.* 3. 2. They like the *Hebrews* could hear of and believe in Chriſt, in ſome kind, but to take him as Chriſt crucified, as the great high Prieſt, as their righteouſneſs,

they

they were yet in great part to learn and to digeſt; which was the caſe both of the *Corinthian* and *Hebrew* Babes, as will appear more anon by comparing 1 *Cor.* 3. 2. with *Heb.* 5. 10, 11. &c. For then by theſe diſtinct attainments and characters 'tis (as I hope) made plain that there is a Claſſis and Form of Babes in Chriſt, who are a degree below the little Children; and of this ſtate of Babes I ſhall treat firſt, becauſe they are the beginning of the new Creation of God; and I am apt to believe that the Kingdom of God and of Chriſt, in Heaven and in Earth, is made up and filled up more of theſe than of any other ſort, not to ſay than of all the other ſorts: that is to ſay, that there are more Babes in Chriſt, than there are Children or Young men or Fathers: to which peradventure that ſaying of our Saviour may bear a Teſtimony, in a fuller ſenſe than 'tis commonly underſtood, though I doubt not but the παιδία little Children there ſpoken of be meant in a natural and litteral ſenſe. The place is *Mark* 10. 14. *Suffer the little Children to come to me, and forbid them not, for of ſuch is the Kingdom of God:* Of Infants or Babes (for ſo παιδία muſt there ſignifie, Chriſt taking them into his arms, *Verſ.* 16.) I ſay of Infants (both in a natural and ſpiritual ſenſe) doth the Kingdom of Heaven conſiſt, as well as, if not more than, of others.

II. *Of*

II. *Of their Attainments.*

2. THE Second thing I am to treat of, is, their Attainments and Characters, in relation to which I ſhall conſider and compare *1 Cor.* 3. 1, 2. with *Heb.* 5. 10. to the end, and *chap.* 6. 1, 2, 3. in both which the Apoſtle uſeth the ſame words and things concerning them, and the explanation of the Milk and Meat in the *Corinths* is clear and full in the *Hebrews*, for he ſpeaks plainly and without a Parable. He having ſpoken much of the Spirit, ſpiritual things and ſpiritual men in the ſecond Chapter to the *Corinthians*, and of the wiſdom of God to them that were perfect, *Verſ.* 6. i. e. to them that were ſpiritual and could judge of and diſcern ſpiritual things, *Verſ.* 15. he doth in the beginning of the third Chapter obviate an objection that might be made by the *Corinthians*, thus, *Why then do ye not Preach ſuch things to us?* to which he Anſwers, That he would gladly and with all his heart do it, but that they being not ſpiritual, but as carnal, being Babes, they were not heretofore nor at preſent in a capacity to receive them, *q. d.* If you will needs know the true reaſon, why I Preach not to you the deep myſteries of Godlineſs, or the wiſdom of God in a myſtery, or the hidden wiſdom of God, *chap.* 2. *verſ.* 7. 'tis not that I cannot or would not Preach it, but that you cannot bear it; you would ſay that to eat his Fleſh, and drink his Blood, and live by it, were

as

an hard saying, as ye did when Christ himself said so, *Joh.* 6. 53, 60. and if you can hardly hear this, but be offended, what would you be if I should Preach of his Ascension, and the executing of the other part of his Priestly office now in heaven, which is yet an higher Doctrine and strong meat (as 'tis called in the *Hebrews* on this very occasion) if that offend you as it did those Babes, *Joh.* 6. 60, 62. how much more would this, as our Saviour there intimates? For this reason my Brethren, I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, and to feed you with Milk (the very Alphabet of Christ his Doctrine) Repentance, &c. I am fain to Preach to you as to sinners and carnal unconverted persons, the very same Doctrine that I did at first.

Let us in the next place see how pat and parallel to this, that other Text in the fifth of the *Hebrews* is. The Authour having told them, *Vers.* 9. That Christ Jesus being made perfect, *i. e.* glorified, was become the Authour or meritorious and procuring cause of Salvation to them that (believe in and) obey him, called of God an High Priest after the order of *Melchisedec*, Vers. 10. *Of whom*, saith he, *Vers.* 11. *we have many things to say*: why do ye not say on and speak out then? Why, because they are hard to be uttered, which doth not imply any defect or inability in the Apostle to utter them, as if he wanted either knowledge or utterance, but an incapacity in them to entertain them, because they were dull of hearing; for though as to their standing they might

might have been teachers, yet as to their understanding they needed to learn, and con over again the first principles, and lay the first foundation: They had need of Milk (as the *Corinthians* had) *i. e.* to be taught to repent and believe as if they were scarce converted, but as carnal. Thus both these places concur in the same subjects and attributes. Before I come to speak of their attainments and characters particularly, I shall briefly touch a few observations from these two Texts, which will make our way the more plain and smooth. As,

1. There are some Christians or persons in Christ which are not men in Christ, but only Babes: They have the Spirit of Christ (in a measure) or else they could not be his, *Rom.* 8. 9. Yet though they have the Spirit, they are not spiritual (in any high degree). Though in Christ Jesus, (for else they were not new-born, or new creatures, 2 *Cor.* 5. 17.) yet they are but Babes in Christ, and *as* (the very next degree to) carnal: they cry rather than speak, their voice is inarticulate and not distinct, 1 *Cor.* 13 11. They have the Image of God upon them, but not perfectly stampt and visible to every eye: 'Tis but (as I may say) God manifest in the Flesh, under a veil and darkly; Christ is not (perfectly) formed in them, *Gal.* 4. 19. You may see some Prints and similitudes, but the several features are not clearly discernable. They are translated from death to life, they are no Abortives; nor are they still-born: they have the beginning of life, and they do but begin to live. There is joy in Heaven that this Man-

child

child is born, though he be not yet grown up, no not throughly washed and cleansed from his pollution. He is yet but in swadling cloaths and in a Manger, if I may allude to what was said of Christ, when he was a Babe. As the life, so the image is imperfect; you can say there's the Image of a man, but who 'tis like (whether like its Father) you can hardly tell; yet this you can say 'tis not the Devils or the Sinners image; and God knows that 'tis his Image; and Christ knows it to be the Fathers Image, for 'tis born not of the Flesh, nor of the will of man, but of the Will of God. They should not have the name of Babes, if they had not the Fathers Image, though it be not so legible to standers by, as that of the spiritual man is. The Babe is a Christian in the smallest Print, but the spiritual man is one in Capital and Golden Letters.

2. Some persons may be but Babes for a long time, *Heb.* 5. 12. Yea, though they live under the best Preaching in the world: as some were under Christ his own Ministery, *Mat.* 11. 25. The Disciples (many of them) were no better, till Christ ascended, and the Spirit descended. The *Corinthians* had heard three of the best Preachers on Earth; *Paul*, *Apollo*, and *Cephas*, 1 *Ephes.* 1. 12. and *chap.* 3. 4, ——6. yet were but Babes. The *Hebrews* had sate under the like Ministry, and yet were but Babes for many years. *Paul* it seems had begotten (or planted) the *Corinthians*, he was their Father, 1 *Cor.* 4. 14, 15. *Apollo* was their nursing Father, he had watered them, 1 *Cor.* 3. 6.

Paul

Paul continued among them a year and an half teaching the Word of God among them, as *Acts* 18. 1, ——11. you have the whole ſtory. After *Pauls* departure *Apollo* came to *Corinth* and watered them, whom *Paul* had planted) *Acts* 18. 27. with 19. 1. yet from that time to the day of the date of this Epiſtle, they continued Babes. *Philip*, who (it ſeems) was called by Chriſt Jeſus in the firſt year of his Miniſtry, and in the beginning of that year, for he was called before the firſt Miracle that Chriſt wrought at the Wedding in *Cana* of *Galilee*, which was the firſt he did to conſum̃ his Miniſterial office, *Joh.* 1. 43. with 2. 11. Yet this *Philip* who had lived with Chriſt all the time of his Miniſtry, was yet, when Chriſt was about to leave the world, but a Babe, for he knew not the Father (as the little Children do) which made Chriſt ſpeak upbraidingly to him, *Joh.* 14. 9. *Have I been ſo long time with you, and yet haſt thou not known me, Philip? He that hath ſeen me hath ſeen the Father, and how ſaiſt thou then, ſhew us the Father?* Alas! of how many Hearers, may many a Preacher ſay, have I been ſo long with you, and yet ye know not me Father! You have not the knowledge of God, be it ſpoken to your ſhame, 1 *Cor.* 15. 34. You are yet in a babiſh ſtate, and not grown or advanced in Faith, Knowledge, Love, *&c.*

3. Theſe Babes can eat milk, though nothing but milk; they ſuckt a year and a half and were not wean'd from the breaſt, but were Babes and Sucklings ſtill. They could eat but milk, their ſtomachs were not able to bear

(though

(though their appetite might desire) strong meat. When Christ Jesus was telling his Disciples the offices of the Spirit, he makes a stop and tells them, I have yet many things (more) to say unto you, but you cannot bear them yet (which is the character of these Babes) *Joh.* 16. 12. *q. d.* I could tell you what great things there are in mine and my Fathers heart and purpose concerning you, but you are not in a condition to receive them, till you have received the Spirit, and grown up to another (higher) state than yet you are in. Babes cannot bear the Mathematical and Metaphysical demonstrations, they cannot understand them, but they are for similitudes, illustrations and Parables, and so Christ taught them, *Mark* 4. 33. To tell them that there is joy in Heaven at the conversion of a sinner will not down with them, unless it be taught by the Parable of a lost and afterward found Sheep, *&c.* Babes are for living by sense more than by Faith. The *Hebrews* understood but little of the Priest-hood of Christ and his Office, which is the strong meat, no though the Apostle illustrated it by their own (shadowy) Priest-hood, which they had under the Law. So the Apostle *Peter* speaking of the state of renovation (the new Heavens, and the new Earth) of which his beloved brother *Paul* had also written in his Epistles, of which (not Epistles, for there is a change of the gender, and 'tis ἐν αἷς, and refers to the *these things*) of which or among which things some are hard to be understood, by whom? *viz.* by

the

the unlearned and unstable, and therefore he) presseth them not only to stedfastness but growth in grace, without which they will not attain to know the things hard to be understood, 2 *Pet.* 3. 13, ——17. But they cannot eat strong meat, yet they can eat milk; though but milk, yet milk; which implies that they were not only alive, but had some (a very little) strength, and took in some nourishment, and had some experience of the working of grace in them, though 'twere weak and faint. Saith the Apostle, *I have fed you with milk*, which notes that he did not only give it them, but that though they did not thrive much, yet it kept life and Soul together (as we use to say) it kept them alive in their present state, which was low and weak. What this milk is, I am to shew anon. Prov. 14.

4. These Babes are owned for Brethren as well as the spiritual ones, by the Apostle; though they had not the right yet they had the left-hand of fellowship. And I *Brethren*, saith he, *though you be but weak, yet you and I are Brethren*: the spiritual *Paul*, and (as carnal) *Corinthian* Babes were Brethren; yea not only *Paul*, but Christ himself (the first born among the many Brethren) is not ashamed to call the Babes, as well as others, Brethren, *Heb.* 2. 11. which takes in all the Children, *Vers.* 13. 14. For Christ took the whole seed of *Abraham*, *Vers.* 16. And if any are Christs (as these Babes are, *for they are in him*, saith our Text) then are they *Abrahams* seed and heirs according to promise, *Gal.* 3. 29. The whole

(brother-hood have fellowship one with another, as all the members of the body have from head to foot.

This then is the summ of all that we have said; that these Babes have truth of Grace, the root of the matter is in them, God hath put truth in their inward parts, and written the truth of Repentance, Faith and Love in their hearts: They are true born, and not Bastards, as the distinction is, *Heb.* 12. 'Tis true also that their grace is weak; 'tis grace and but grace in a low degree; beside also 'tis mix'd with much corruption (strong corruptions are arguments of weak grace) they are as carnal: of all Saints the Babe-Saint hath the least grace and the most corruption. And (which is to be noted of all the rest also) these Babes have not their denomination, nor are so called meerly from their being but newly born, but from their continuance in such a state. No state is measured by one or two acts, but from the tenor, frame and course of their hearts and lives for such a time and duration. We call no man a dunce or a bad Scholar from one daies dulness, or for one miscarriage in an exercise, but when he is constantly dull and blockish, as the *Hebrews* were, who were Babes for a long time. 'Tis the habit that gives the denomination to this and every Classis or Form. And now I shall proceed to shew the attainment of these Babes, which in both Texts is expresst by

Their

Their Feeding on Milk.

Where, what is meant by Milk, and how they Feed on this Milk, is discovered, 1. More generally. 2. More Particularly.

MIlk we see is the Food of Babes: and therefore 'tis necessary that we come to know what this Milk is, for the better discovery of their state and attainment. In the general, all the Word of God (the Gospel) is called Milk, 1 *Pet.* 2. 2. *As new-born Babes desire the sincere milk of the Word, that you may grow thereby*; This Milk is for growth; the word is not only for begetting, as *chap.* 1. 23. and 25. but 'tis for nourishing and bringing up also, even to a perfect stature, *Ephes.* 4. 11, ---16. 'Tis observable, that *Peter* doth not speak meerly of the Word written in the Bible, but of the Word Preach'd, *chap.* 1. 25. But then this Word Preach'd must be *sincere milk of the Word*, not mixt and corrupted with and by the devices, inventions, glosses and comments of Jews or Gentiles; this the Apostle *Paul* disclaims and declaims against, 2 *Cor.* 2. 17. *We are not as many, who corrupt, or deal deceitfully with the Word of God; but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ*, which he also hath again, *chap.* 4. 2. *We have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty* (or shame) *not walking in craftiness, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth, commending our selves to every mans conscience in*

the sight of God. We are no huckſters like them mentioned, 2 *Pet.* 2. 1,--3. As this word muſt not be mixed with and corruped by falſe Doctrine and baſe ends, ſo this milk muſt not be made luſcious and fulſome with the Sugar and Honey of mens wiſdom and eloquence, for this doth the Apoſtle no leſs diſown and diſallow, as may be ſeen, 1 *Cor.* 2. 4. My ſpeech and my Preaching was not with inticing words of mans wiſdom (I was not as *ſounding braſs or a tinkling cymbal*, I did not uſe feigned and made words to ſhew wit and learning; I came not with that wiſdom which lies in words, with witticiſms, *chap.* 1. 17.) but in demonſtration of the Spirit and power. So then 'tis not a ſound of words, but ſound and ſincere doctrine or Milk of the Word by which we grow and thrive.

But more particularly (as to our Subject) milk is uſed to denote weak nouriſhment, and is oppoſed to ſtrong meat; and thus Milk notes the firſt principles of the Oracles of God, the Alphabet of Chriſtian Religion, of this the Babes have their mouth and belly full, but are weak and puny things notwithſtanding. That Milk therefore, in theſe Texts, is put for the principles (the firſt Elements of the Doctrine of Chriſt) or as 'tis in the Margent, the word of the beginning of Chriſt, *Heb.* 5. 12. with 6. 1. The very foundation of Repentance, *&c.* which is, that the Kingdom of God (the Meſſiah diſpenſation) was at hand, *Mark* 1. 15: ſo that Milk notes preparation doctrine, and the very firſt elements of the beginning of the Oracles of God, as the words are, *Heb.* 5. 12.

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the initiating Doctrine, wherein (saith *Jac. Capellus*) the Jews and Christians did agree, as a foundation to build upon: Now what this Doctrine was, is expreſt under ſeveral heads, *chap.* 6. 1, 2. *viz.* Repentance from dead works, Faith towards God, *&c.*

But (it may be) ſome will object, here is no mention of Faith in Chriſt, and can they be Chriſtians in any degree (though but Babes) who believe not in Chriſt? To this I anſwer, That theſe Principles or Foundation Doctrines, are called the Word or Doctrine of the beginning of Chriſt, *Verſ.* 1. and therefore this Repentance and Faith is not without reſpect to Chriſt; and when the Apoſtle mentions theſe two elſewhere, he ſpeaks of Chriſt as the object of Faith, teſtifying both to the Jews and to the Greeks, Repentance towards God, and Faith in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, *Acts* 20.21. and this the Apoſtle taught the *Corinthians* at firſt, 1 *Cor.* 15. 2, 3. which opens the meaning of that ſpeech of his, 1 *Cor.* 2. 2. Beſide, in calling this foundation Doctrine, Chriſt muſt needs be taken in, for other foundation can no man lay, 1 *Cor.* 3. 11. becauſe God hath laid him and no other, *Acts* 4. 11, 12. and 'tis by him that we believe in God, as the Apoſtle hath it, 1 *Pet.* 1. 21. Withall we muſt remember that theſe were but Babes, and were unskilfull in the word of righteouſneſs, though not without ſome confuſed notions of it.

Indeed both God and Chriſt are the objects of Faith; and though God be the ultimate object of Faith, for Chriſts deſign is to bring us

to God, 1 *Pet.* 3. 18. Yet Christ is the more immediate object of it; but nature teaching us to look to God, and revelation of grace only to look to Christ; many persons (especially Babes) are apt to have more recourse to God than to Christ: For the Faith of Babes is of no higher an elevation, than theirs generally was under the Old Testament, who had not such distinct notions of Christ Jesus as we under the Gospel have or ought to have, he being now manifested to manage all affairs for us between the Father and us; and therefore our Saviour bids his Disciples not only to believe in God, but in him also, *Joh.* 14. 1. and accordingly all along afterward, the Apostles in their Preaching, direct men to believe in Christ Jesus, and this is the excellency of knowing (or the excellent knowledge of) Christ Jesus, to know him so as to be found in him, not having our own righteousness which is of the Law (which Babes too much look after) but that which is by Faith in Christ, *Phil.* 3. 8. 9. And this is that which the Apostle directs the *Corinthians* to, 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. and 3. 10, 11. And so the *Hebrews*, in setting him forth to them as an High Priest after the order of *Melchisedec*, the King of righteousness, and the Lord our righteousness.

Hence then I conclude, that their eating of Milk is the receiving and practising these Principles, or Elements, the beginning of the Doctrine of Christ, *viz.* Repentance, Faith, &c. which in the general takes in such things as these, a sight and sense of sin, together with

sorrow

ſorrow for and Repentance from it, as alſo Prayer for pardon: a ſecret relying on the mercy of God in Chriſt Jeſus, which gives them hope; An obedience to Ordinances, as Baptiſm, &c. A believing of the Reſurrection, and of eternal Judgement. But there are ſealings of the Spirit, joyes in the Holy Ghoſt, &c. which the Babes are not acquainted with: they attain to what is neceſſary, and but what is neceſſary to Salvation, *Heb.* 6. 9. They have enough to keep them out of Hell, and to land them ſafe in Heaven; but as to the well-being of a Saint, *viz.* an aſſurance of the Fathers Love, which the little Children have; ſtrength of Faith to overcome temptations, which the young men have; great wiſdom from long or much experience, which the Fathers have: of theſe they know nothing. They are Gods building indeed, 1 *Cor.* 3. 9. but only of the firſt Floor, or ſtory, juſt laid upon the foundation, yet ſo that they alſo are the Temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth but almoſt indiſcernably in them, 1 *Cor.* 3. 16. they will, I ſay, have an entrance into Heaven, becauſe theſe things are in them, but not an abundant entrance becauſe theſe things do not abound in them, as *Peter* intimates, 2 Pet. 1. 8, — 11. and all this is ſpoken of a ſtate wherein they may live and die and not reach beyond it.

Queſt. Before I proceed 'tis neceſſary to clear up one ſcruple that may ariſe from hence, which is this; Seeing growth of grace is neceſſary to prove the truth of grace, how can theſe be ſaid to grow, if they may continue in this ſtate all their daies? *Anſw.*

Anſw. You may remember how I premiſed that none can tell but he may be built up a Story (or more) higher, and therefore none ſhould take up with this ſtint, but preſs forward; yet ſeeing there is ſuch a ſtate (which is to abide ſo) the queſtion is of theſe, and to it I anſwer, firſt by conceſſion that growth of grace is required of all as the evidence of its truth; but then I ſay there are ſeveral kinds of growth, and all of them are not neceſſary to this ſtate: as the ſtate is, ſuch is the growth required. There is a growth by addition, and a growth of continuation and perſeverance and going on to the end; that growth is required of and is neceſſary to the other ſtates, but this only is neceſſary unto this ſtate of Babes; the others growth is by addition, 2 *Pet.* 1. 5, ——11. but Growth of theſe is by abiding in grace: they but con the ſame leſſon over and over, when others take out new ones, and turn over leaf. Or as a Tree that grows in a continuance of bringing forth the fruit of its kind, *Gen.* 1. 11. but if a graft or ſcyon of a nobler ſort be ingrafted on or into it, then it brings forth other and better fruit. So that growth in theſe is not a ſuperaddition of new grace, but a renewing of and abounding in their firſt grace. This muſt be the growth of the *Corinthians* and *Hebrews*, or elſe there was none at all, for they were the ſame after a long time that they were before. And therefore *Paul* puts the *Corinthians* only to prove (for the preſent) that they were in the Faith, and that Chriſt was in them, 2 *Cor.* 13. 5. and

though

ough he put the *Hebrews* upon giving
ligence to a full assurance, *chap.* 6 11. yet on
ppofition, they should not attain it, he often
lls upon them to hold fast and not to apostа-
ze, concluding that if they did not advance, yet
ey might be saved by abiding in the present
ate, though they were but Babes, *chap.* 3.
——12, 13, 14. and 10. 23,——35. and
lls them that the just shall live by Faith (that
hich they had) that is, they should continue
lieving to the end, and not draw back to per-
tion, *Vers.* 36,——39.

To seek out this and clear it too, let us con-
er some other places, which shew that a going
and continuing in the same grace, or an
lding fast of what they have is that only
hich is required of some Christians, as *Rev.* 2.
, 25. 'Tis said to them of *Thyatira*, who
pt free from *Jesabels* doctrine, *I will put*
on you none other burthen, but that which ye
ve already, hold fast till I come, keep your
und; so again, *Rev.* 3. 11. 'tis said to
iladelphia, who had but a little strength,
rs. 8. *Hold fast that which thou hast, and to*
m that overcometh, &c. So that perseverance
the little strength that any have, hath the
omise of Salvation (and is all some Saints
owth) *He that continueth to the end shall be*
ved; and this is called *overcoming*, which
th the notion of some kind of growth in it.
nd therefore it seems clear, that the gain of
abes is in not losing, and their growth in not
ecreasing and declining: or if you had rather
xpress it so, the Babes growth is in reiterated

acts

acts of the same kind, or in abounding in acts (which is a growing in degrees of the same kind) as also in desires after higher attainments (as I shall shew anon) eating more and more Milk, repenting more and more, and believing more and more, even unto the end, increasing in these things to their fulness, and not in passing into another state. I speak still of one appointed to this state alone.

And on this occasion before I close up this Chapter, it will not be amiss to take notice (in relation hereunto) of the Covenant of God made with all Saints, and the promises of God made but to some Saints; the promises of growth (by addition) I humbly conceive are not made to Saints, as such; but to Saints under such a qualification, and acting such and such graces and duties in such and such degrees; as for instance, *Psal.* 1. 3. there is a promise of growth; 'tis not every Saint shall, but he shall: who is that he? *viz.* he that delights in the Law of the Lord, and in his *Law doth meditate day and night*; this meditation shall be to him, as the watering of the River is to a Tree. But now the Covenant (as it gives, so it secures grace) it is made to and with the lowest Saint, and warrantiseth it against falling away only, *Jer.* 32. 40. *I will put my fear in their hearts, and they shall not depart from me*: As Christ pray'd for *Peter* that his Faith might not (totally and utterly) fail, *Luk.* 22. 32. And this I speak for the incouragement of poor Babes, that they may not stumble at this, that they do not grow as others do;

do; I tell them and would have them bless God for it, that they grow with a growth suitable to their state, *i. e.* they rely and cleave close, they Apostatize not, but hold fast, they persevere in eating milk till death them do part; they attain to the extent of the Covenant, *perseverance*, and to the end of their Faith, *the saving of their Souls*. And this much of the Attainment of Babes in the general.

The more particular attainments of Babes, as Repentance, Faith, &c.

From *Heb.* 6. 1, 2.

THE Apostle doth not in this place put the Babes upon laying aside these things, but speaks his own intendment to lay them aside (as to his present further discourse concerning them) and to go on to treat of other and higher matters, more perfect doctrine, *i. e.* such as belongs to perfect and grown Saints; he calls these Doctrines *Foundations*, and therefore doubtless would not have them dig'd up, but would have them build on these other and higher stories, even to the laying of the top stone. At present he only names them to shew what these Babes had attained to.

These six principles are (as I may call them) six portions of Milk, which the Babes did eat and were nourished by: the two first, *viz.* Repentance and Faith are internal graces wrought and working in them; the other four are proofs of this internal work: the two first of the

the four, *viz.* their submission to the ordinances of Baptism and laying on of hands, are proofs of their Conversion, in the sight of men; the two latter of the four, *viz.* their practical belief of the Resurrection, and eternal Judgement, are proofs of their Conversion, Repentance, and Faith in the sight of God: and these should not be separated: for submitting to Ordinances, without believing the Resurrection and eternal Judgement thereupon, are no proofs of Repentance and Faith; No, for without this Faith, the other is in vain and men are yet in their sins as our Apostle tells us, 1 *Cor.* 15. 12. 17. And else what shall they do that are Baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then Baptized for the dead? *q. d.* Baptism is in vain submitted to, if there be no Resurrection. When the very notion and design of Baptism is to denote the Resurrection from death, *Rom.* 6. 3, — 5. *Col.* 2. 12, 13. So on the other hand, to believe the Resurrection and Judgement (as the Jews did) is no proof of Conversion, without submitting to Ordinances of Baptism, *&c.* Therefore when our Saviour bid his Disciples Preach the Gospel, 'tis thus, he that believeth and is Baptized shall be saved, *Mark* 16. 16. Well then, all these principles conjunctly are the discoveries of the Babes attainment: of all which I shall now proceed to speak in order as they lie in the Text.

Of

Of their Repentance from dead Works.

REpentance is the first Milk which they ſuck, take in and beſt of all digeſt; they repent not only for but from dead Works, *i. e.* ſuch works as they do who are dead in ſins, *Epheſ.* 2. 1, 2, 3. They eſcape the groſs polluti-ons which are in the world through luſt. The other portion of Milk, *viz.* Faith, is of more hard digeſtion with them, and ſtays long in their mouth, before they let it down; For, ſaith the Text, 'tis but Faith *towards* God, it is but in motion and tendency, rather in *fieri* than in *eſſe*, in acting than acted: and this not ſo much and properly towards Chriſt, as to-wards God: not excluding Chriſt, but that they have leſs ſtill in exerciſing Faith towards Chriſt, than towards God. But as to Repen-tance they are better skill'd and able to act it at a better rate than Faith. In relation to this, there are three things which I ſhall do, 1. Shew that this is the firſt Milk that Babes eat. And 2. That they are better at eating this, *viz.* Re-pentance, than Faith. 3. The nature of Re-pentance, and how Babes act it.

1. That this is the firſt Milk they eat: which will the better appear, by conſidering who have been and are accounted Babes (through-out the whole Scripture) as 1. The moſt and generality of the people of God under the old Teſtament: There were indeed ſome Fathers, as *Abraham*, *&c.* but as I may ſay there was but one of a ſort, as *Abraham* the Father of the faithful,

faithful, *Job* of the patient, *Moses* of the meek, &c. There were also some young men, who were strong and overcame the evil one, as *Joshua* and *Caleb*, who followed God fully, the Word of God did abide in them; but there were Babes in abundance, as the Apostle tells us, *Gal.* 4. 3, 4. When we were Children (the word is, Babes) *i. e. Vers.* 4. when we were under the Law, we were in a state of bondage, rather as servants, than Children, *Vers.* 7. And accordingly the milk given these to eat was the doctrine of Repentance (for Christ Jesus was under a vail, and represented to them mostly in types and shaddows, and their Faith was but *towards* God and Christ.) 2. The people of God in *John* Baptist's time were but Babes generally, and therefore he also fed them with milk, the doctrine of Repentance, yet still directing their Faith to Christ who was to come after him: his doctrine and Baptism was that of Repentance. 3. In Christs time, while in the world, most of Disciples were but Babes (as was hinted heretofore.) And Christ himself gave them Milk for their first feeding, yet mixt with Faith, as *Mark* 1. 15. *Repent and belive the Gospel*, which he (in *Vers.* 1.) calls the beginning of the Gospel of Christ, as 'tis called in the Text before us, *Heb.* 6. 1. They did also believe in God, and our Saviour calls upon them to believe in him also, as an advance of their Faith, *Joh.* 14. 1. Again, 4. All at first Conversion are Babes, and to all these is Repentance better known than Faith, for some time (more or less) and the first doctrine

ctrine Preach'd to the firſt Converts, was Repentance, *Acts* 2. 38. and they that are appointed to be no more than Babes, feed on this Milk all their daies.

2. I am to ſhew that Babes digeſt this and are better at it, than at Faith, Love, &c. They are beſt at Repentance, 'tis their excellency, or the chief of their attainments: not that they are better at it than the Saints of higher Forms, but that as they have more need of it, ſo they are more Artiſts at it (it being their trade and calling) than they are at other graces. The beſt of the generality of the Jewiſh Saints under the Old Teſtament lay in repenting and returning (a word in great uſe under that diſpenſation) in weeping and mourning, all which belong to Repentance: So in *John's* time, the fruits were to be ſuch as were worthy of, or agreeable and ſuitable to Repentance, as their higheſt pitch; in Chriſts own time, not only *Peters* weeping bitterly, but other ſuch like Acts were found among the Diſciples, as the beſt of what they had attained to: So in the *Hebrews*, this leads the Van, that they repented from dead works; who yet were unskilful as to the word of righteouſneſs. The *Corinthians*, among whom were ſo many Babes, were famous for repenting, as may be ſeen, 2 *Cor.* 7. 10, 11.

Having cleared theſe two things, I come now to ſhew briefly,

3. The nature of Repentance, and how the Babes do act it. As to the nature of it, I ſhall proceed gradually and diſcover it by ſeveral ſteps. The 1. Where-

1. Whereof is, a sight and sense of sin: The first work of the Spirit is to convince of sin, which is not only to let men see it, but to make them feel it; that they may be sensible what an evil thing it is to be a sinner.

There are indeed some common Principles (like seeds) scattered here and there in the hearts of men that live under the sound of the Gospel, before this powerful conviction come upon them, and by which way is made for Conversion. As, not only that there is a God, and that he ought to be worshipped (which the Heathen also have) but that the Will of God is the rule of worship, and that this Will and rule is reveal'd in the Scripture, from whence we learn what the good is which we ought to do, and the evil which we ought to leave undone: that he who transgresseth this Law doth sin; that whoever sins, deserves the wages of sin; that all are sinners; that every sinner stands in need of a Redeemer and Mediator; that Jesus Christ, *Immanuel*, the Son of God and the Virgin *Mary*, is this Redeemer and Mediator; and that the benefit (as to Salvation) which accrews to us from this Christ, is by Faith in him.

But though these Principles be owned by men, and God makes use of them to work on men, yet they amount not to a powerful and converting conviction, without a particular application and setting of them home by the Spirit of God. How many have this common notion *that they are sinners*, yea that they are such and such sinners, as Swearers, Drunkards, unclean, &c.

unclean, &c. yet are not enough from seeing the ugliness and feeling the burden of sin, so as to repent of it. Therefore the conviction I speak of is accompanied with a sense, which is called *pricking at heart*, made by a special application of sin, and usually (if not alwaies) in the first place of one or other particular sin: Act. 2. 37.
For not only common reason tells us, that generals are known by the particulars wherein they exist, but experience also tells us, that you shall scarce find any man, that is convinced of a bad nature, but by a bad life. *The tree is known by its fruit.* *Hazael* would not believe the Prophet that he had such a dogged nature; No nor *Peter* that he had so treacherous an heart, till sad experience made the conviction by its own breaking out. 'Tis by a particular conviction of sin, either that of omission or commission, that men come to believe the more general corruption of their nature. When it comes to a *Thou art the man*, 'tis effectual indeed. And I think that the instances of converted ones (such excepted as have been as 'twere sanctified from the Womb) will evince this, that the first conviction is from being guilty of a particular sin; and accordingly their confession and reformation begins there.

This then is the sight and sense of sin which Babes have leading them to Repentance; viz. of one or other particular sin; of sin in the fruit, more than in the root; of sinful lives more than of sinful hearts; though this also come on by degrees afterward. The desire

fulness and desperate wickedness of the heart was a thing that the money were not much convinced of, *Jer.* 17. 9. No, nor the Disciples in Christs own time, for our Saviour tells them that they were without understanding in this point, *Matth.* 15. 15,——20. And the Apostle cautions the *Hebrew* Babes to take heed lest there be an evil heart of unbelief or any root of bitterness in them, more than they were aware of: Few Babes know what's latent in their hearts. *Peter* tells Christ upon occasion that he was a sinner, yet would not believe that his heart was so sinful, as Christ told him he would find it to be. They are generally (as carnal and) like other men in this, who know they sin, yet scarce know whence it comes (*[illegible]*,) and therefore commonly charge it more upon the Devil than upon themselves, and upon his temptations, rather than their own corrupt natures, if not on God himself. *Jer.* 1. 17, 19, 15.

[illegible] the second hope degree of Repentance [illegible] of and sorrow for sin, (I put them [illegible] because they go together) without which there is no true Repentance: 'Tis [illegible] sorrow that leads to adult Repentance, and this sorrow cannot be kept in ('tis as coals [illegible]) it breaks out in con[illegible] and self-abhorrency. [illegible] and sense, so these will [illegible] and where this sorrow is, it is attended

[illegible] with confession, and complaints to God.

How these things are in and are exprest by Babes, I am now to declare, and 'tis thus: The thing which pincheth most and consequently comes first out in confession is the particular sin they were convinced of. Take a new Convert at Prayers, and I warrant you, that you will hear him telling God sad stories of what he was convinced of, be it good omitted, or evil committed, be it what sin soever: For I take it to be an infallible rule that according to the sight and sense, such is the sorrow and complaint; and that being of particular sin, this also is of the same. It is with these souls, as 'tis with children playing in the dust, they are not so much concerned for all the rest, as for that which falls into their eyes, they brush off the rest without much ado, but at that in their eyes they fall a crying. 'Tis said of *Paul* (assoon as converted) *Behold he prays*, and had you over-heard him, doubtless you would have heard sad bemoanings of his persecuting the Saints, a thing which stuck close to him, as a thorn in his flesh, all his daies.

Beside this 'tis to be observed, that there is a great deal of legal bondage cleaving (as dross to Gold) unto their sorrow, for as yet they mourn more for sin as against them and a burden to themselves, than as 'tis against and a burden to God: more as it stands in the way of their peace and Salvation, than the glory of God; though that also have a

little place. *Woe unto us, we have rewarded evil to our own Souls*, say they in the Old Testament: A grown Saint doth not leave out the consideration of the evil it hath done to himself, when he sorrows for sin, and God allows it should be so, yet this goes most to his heart, as it did to *David's*, *Psal.* 51. *That against thee, against thee I have sinned*; he could better bear his broken bones, his own shame and pain, than the sense of this, that he hath grieved and dishonoured his God: But this is the weakness of poor Babes (to which yet God will be merciful) that whereas they fetch a sigh now and then for Gods sake, they fetch many for their own. They are best at that to which nature is assistant and helpful, as 'tis to sorrow for sin, because they have wrong'd themselves; but Faith and Hope are altogether supernatural and therefore are more faintly acted by them.

Again, you may observe in them, that as the sight and sense of a particular sin did first awaken them, so it still startles them, and they think that scarce any other, or all the other are such a cloud between God and them as that one sin; and they scarce mind so much a general pardon, as the pardon of that one sin: Indeed they sometimes cry out in general, *Wretch that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?* But their most common complaint is of such particular sins, and of such in which Satan generally hath an hand; but as for the secret lurkings of lust, the stealings away of the heart from God, private correspondencies with

pride

pride and worldly love, &c. these things (which are the great tryals and exercises of grown Saints) are little taken notice of, or minded by the Babes.

Where they do sorrow, 'tis true they do sorrow greatly, and sometimes like *Rachel* refuse to be comforted, and are in danger to be swallowed up with over much sorrow, *i. e.* with despair; of which there are these reasons, 1. Because they have a sense of sin but not of forgiveness, they are convinced of sin but not of righteousness: Now though the sense of a pardon do not take away all sorrow for sin, yet it takes away the excess of it, as also the legality, but this being not fully attained by Babes, they sorrow many times as *men without hope*: and this continues the more violent, because, 2. They find their corruption yet strong and unmortified: and because 'tis not done, they think it shall not be done, but they shall one day perish by the hand of *Saul*. The tast and tang of their former sins is (many times by Satan) kept fresh and strong, though they have repented, and therefore they fear and mourn desperately, but this sorrow needs sorrowing for, it being so drossie and mercenary, for they even think to make God amends this way, and to compound with God, so much sorrow for so much sin, without eying Jesus Christ (the Propitiation and the Advocate) as they ought. All this (beside the confirmation that is from experience of young converts) will be evinced by the story of the Prodigal, Luke 15. of whom 'tis said in the first place,

that (after being long dead in sin) he came to himself, i. e. was convinced of his wicked living, and therewithall of his own lost undone and perishing condition, which is the very hinge upon which he turns about to go to his Father; The first sense is not of sin as against God (though that came in afterward) but as against himself: whereupon he takes up a resolution to go and complain of sin, and withal that he will indent with God, to serve him for wages as an hired servant: but assoon as the Father had kissed him, and assured him of his Love, though he goes on to confess his sin, yet not a word more of being an hired Servant. So these poor Babes they come to God with a composition, and indent like hirelings, they are afraid of being damned, and rather than so, they will serve God with Prayers and Tears day and night; but after God hath kist them with the kisses of his mouth, they abide in the house as Sons that serve him, and not as Servants. The grown Saints then, we see, do much in a little; when Babes (as and while such) do but a little (though they keep much ado) in all they do. Love and Faith do more in a day, than ear will be able to do in many daies, or years. But,

3. To come to the highest step and degree of Repentance, 'tis not only for but from dead works; there is a reformation and fruits worthy of, proper and suitable to, this their Repentance. Men that repent do not only say, What have I done? and mourn for that, but what? Lord! what wilt thou have me to do? and so fall into a way of obedience. When John

the

the Baptist called for fruits worthy of Repentance; 'tis very observable that *Luke* 3. 7, &c. the people askt. *What shall we do?* Vers. 10. and the Publicans, *What shall we do?* Vers. 12. and the Souldiers, *What shall we do?* Vers. 14. To all whom he gives directions to leave their former (particular) sins, and to lead new lives directly contrary to their former lives; which is the proper fruit of Penitents. When they were pricks at heart, *Acts* 2. 37. they cryed out, *What shall we do?* And the Jaylor, *Acts* 16. *Sirs, what must I do?* And *Paul* himself, *Acts* 9. *Lord what will thou have me to do?* True Penitents are not only for humiliation, but reformation: they repent not only for, but from dead works, yea the Babes do so. How? or in what sense? Thus,

Dead works are properly such sins as they lived in before conviction and conversion, such as are the course of the world and of men acted by the Devil, as is clear by *Eph.* 2. 1,2,3. There are other sins which are deadly workings (*for to be carnally minded is death*, Rom. 8. 6.) which yet cannot in a strict sense be called dead works, which are the sins of men dead in trespasses and sins. So that though grown Saints do mortifie, not only the flesh, but the lusts and affections too, yet Babes scarce go further than leaving the works of the flesh, the sins in which they lived before conversion; thus did the Prodigal, he spent no more of his time and substance upon Harlots and riotous living. *Zacheus* begins with mercy and restitution as to any wrongs he had done to any,

Luke 19. 8. So *Paul* to Preach the Christ and the way which he had persecuted, *Acts* 9. The Jaylor from making wounds, turns Chirurgion and binds up the wounds which he had made, *Acts* 16. Throughout the Scripture you will find, that babes became clean contrary to themselves, you shall not find them retaining the sins which they were first convinced as guilty of, and this is their Repentance from dead works. And this shall suffice to have been spoken concerning the Explication of the first attainment of Babes, or their eating the first portion of Gospel-milk, *viz.* Repentance from dead works.

The Application follows.

1. *With reference to them that have not Repented, and so are not Babes.* 2. *To them who are Babes, and have repented from dead works.*

1. WIth reference to them who have not repented, and are not yet Babes, not new-born. Alas! there are but too many who live under the Preaching and Profession of the Gospel, & are called Christians, who have not received into themselves this first spoonful of Milk, nor learnt the first principle of Repentance from dead works. Though men take up the common Principles (which I named above but newly) yet they *have eyes and see not, ears and hear not, so as to understand with their heart*, to be converted and healed. Their hearing and seeing doth not affect their hearts,

they

cy are ſtill without a ſenſe and feeling of ſin. ow many that know Drunkenneſs, Unannels, &c. to be ſins, and that they live in ch ſins, yet are not prickt at heart? they ne- r yet ſo ſaw ſin as to feel it; nor ſo felt it, as to nſeſs and be ſorry for it; or never ſo comained or ſorrowed as to repent from dead orks; to cry out, *What have I done!* Or, *ord, what wilt thou have me to do!* they have one more than enough to undo themſelves; ave been told the way of recovering and ving themſelves; and yet theſe things are t to them as idle tales, and we are to them s *Lot* to his Sons in Law) like them that ock; that flatter them with promiſes, or are them with threatnings, as if we were not good earneſt. But that they may yet at laſt e awakened, and if peradventure God may ive them Repentance, I ſhall intreat them to conſider theſe things.

1. Conſider this, that all the common principles which thou haſt received from the light of Nature, Law, or Goſpel will not be ſufficient to juſtifie, but they will to condemn thee, s *Rom.* 1. 18,—21, &c. and *chap.* 2. 14,—27. Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt will one day ſit in Judgement upon men, and he will then convince and condemn them from their own Principles: Mens Conſciences will be one of the Books that ſhall then be opened, and they will be ſelf-condemned. As for example, ſuppoſe Chriſt Jeſus to ask theſe Queſtions, Did not you believe and know that there was a God? Yes Lord, we did, Why then did you not ſerve him?

him? Did not you believe that his Word de-
clared his will? Yes Lord, saith Conscience.
Why then did ye not obey his Word? Oh!
Men will be speechless and silent, having no-
thing to say for themselves; as he that came
without a wedding garment. If thy Priv-
ples do not convince thee now, they will con-
demn thee hereafter, and thou wilt cry out
when 'tis too late, my perdition is of my self,
even I being Judge, I have rewarded evil to
mine own soul.

2. Consider, how many times God hath
been knocking at thy door, and how long
waiting to be gracious unto thee: How many
times hast thou been smitten at a Sermon, and
trembled like *Felix*; how often thou hast been
almost perswaded (as *Agrippa*) to be a Chri-
stian; how many times thou hast purposed and
promised to sin no more; and yet after all this
thou hast given up thy self to sin, and even like
another *Ahab*, sold thy self to work wicked-
ness: How thou hast eaten, drunk, played
and shook away the convictions that have been
upon thee: How thou hast forgotten, or smo-
thered and put off these things thus; 'tis true
sin is an ugly thing, but it hath its pleasure for
the present, 'tis time enough and I intend to re-
pent hereafter; others are as bad as I and yet
we scape well enough; only a qualm and gripe
comes over us now and then, but it goes off
again; Ministers must have leave (because 'tis
their place) to reprove sin; but God is mer-
ciful, &c. Thus do many put off all convictions,
and though they have been galled and wound-
ed,

ed, yet (like Dogs) they lick themselves whole again, as they think. Yet after all this it pleaseth God to take more pains with thee, this day he calls on thee once more, to hear his voice lest thou be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin, and by thy impenitency and hardness of heart shouldst *heap up wrath against the day of wrath.* Oh what goodness is this! despise it not at thy peril, see *Rom.* 2. 4, 5. For,

3. Consider and know assuredly, if thou die impenitent and in thy sins, thou art damned (for ever) irrecoverably. If thou harden thy heart, God may harden it too; if thou give up thy self, God may give thee up too, and then thou art in the Suburbs of Hell, and dost but fill up thy measure, and heat the Furnace seven times hotter while thou art adding sin to sin. The tokens of Death are upon thee, the very Plague sore, for such is an hard heart: and I have nothing to say but the Lord have mercy upon thee; which if he have not, thou wilt howl and cry and roar in Hell; Oh wretch that I was, that for a little sinful pleasure, and worldly pelf (which was but for a little time) I have undone, undone my Soul and that for ever, for ever (wo and alas) for ever. But now if God bless this to awaken thee, that thou do in earnest say, *What shall I do to be saved?* if thou be a thirst, then hear Gods Proclamation, *Isa.* 55. *Ho, every one that thirsteth, come and buy Wine and Milk, without money and without price (take the waters of Life freely,* Rev. 22. 17.) *Incline your ear and come,*

hear

hear and your Souls shall live, &c. Dost thou not hear him calling? *Come to me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest*, Matth. 11. 28. behold he calleth thee.

2. The second branch of this use is to you Babes who have repented from dead works. And 'tis to bespeak you not to despise the day of small things, but bless God that hath brought you hitherto; God hath laid a foundation, and he will lay the top-stone in due time, that I may allude to what is said, *Zech.* 4. 9, 10. In this Text that we are upon, this Doctrine is called a Foundation, and surely 'tis not laid in vain. We come sometime to a place where some great person is about to build a great House, and when we see only the ground-work laid, and a great deal of rubbish lying about it, we think little of it; but if we stay awhile till it be built upon, we haply admire the design and structure too: God brought a goodly world out of the Chaos which was first made; and so he doth in the new Creation: the first work seems to be a confused business; but if we stay till the six daies be over, and God have finished his work, we shall then say, Behold it is good exceedingly. When the Jews began to build, the Heathen laugh'd them to scorn, *What will these feeble Jews do? will they revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish? if the Fox go up he shall break down this stone wall*, Nehem. 4. 2, 3. But for all this, the head stone thereof was brought forth with shouting, *Grace, grace unto it*: And so shall it be with thee O Babe, thou shalt attain to thy perfect

perfect ſtature, therefore do not look on this ſmall beginning as a thing of nought. God will carry thee from Repentance to Faith, and from thence to obedience, thou ſhalt have food convenient for thee to bring thee up: Bleſs God then that thou haſt learned the firſt letter of his Name (*The Lord gracious*, for ſo thou haſt taſted him, 1 *Pet.* 2. 2, 3.) that thou haſt learnt the firſt leſſon in the School of Chriſt, and till thou learn more, conſider theſe things that follow, as well as thoſe that have been already ſpoken.

1. Think what a mercy 'tis that God hath put a ſtop to thine iſſue of blood, and to that fountain of uncleanneſs which did run over into thy converſation: Conſider what thou wert doing, wert thou not committing iniquity with both hands greedily, drinking it down as water, and doing wickedly as thou couldeſt, to thy utmoſt? and hath God ſtopt thee in thy career? Oh think what mercy 'tis: How many thouſand actual ſins more mighteſt thou have been guilty of, if God had not put this hook into thy noſtrils, and bit into thy Jaws, and ſo kept thee from *ruſhing like the Horſe into the battle.* Had not God hedged thy way with theſe pricking thorns and grieving bryars of conviction and Repentance, thou wouldſt have *followed thy Lovers to death and hell*; and is it nothing that he hath prevented thee? Bleſs God (as *David* did for *Abigals* coming) who kept thee from ſinning this day. It may be thou wert reſolved (like *Saul*, though 'twere madneſs in thee as in him) to go on in being injurious,

rious, a persecutor and blasphemer; yet he is proud, covetous, unclean, &c. as thou couldst to gratifie the lust of the eye, the flesh and pride of life to the utmost; hath God diverted, yet converted thee? bless him for it. 'Tis a great thing to have a stop put to sin, though it be but newly done, or little else done: as the Apostle tells the *Corinthian* Babes, *Such were some of you* (viz. such as were incapable of Heaven, and fit for Hell) *but ye are washed*, &c. 1 *Cor.* 6. 9, — 11. and yet the work of grace was but very imperfect in them.

2. Consider how many there are yet in the world, and it may be many of thine own relations, *Bone of thy bone, and flesh of thy flesh*, and some that have sate in the same Pew and heard the same Gospel that thou hast, and yet are not come so far as Repentance from, nor conviction of their dead works: they are yet dead in sins and trespasses, fast asleep in their security, without any sense of sin and sorrow for it; and hath God awakened thee to righteousness? Oh despise not the buddings of grace, but bless him that thou art so far quickned, that thou canst eat a little milk, though as yet but one portion. When so many sit and walk in darkness the way to Hell, that thine eyes should be opened to see the danger, and cry out, *What shall I do to be saved*, is a mercy not to be undervalued, but to be prized by thee, and God to be praised for it. 'Tis great mercy that the foundation is laid, that the work is begun.

3. Consider this, that though thou be not yet cleathed like the Sons of Nobles, and rich-

ly

y dreſt like them, yet that the plain cloath, the
ountry ruſſet with which thou art clad will
reſerve thee. 'Tis with Gods Children as 'tis
with the children of men in this reſpect; you
ome to a poor mans Houſe, he hath a child
ewly born, 'tis dreſt too, I but in very plain
louts; when in the rich mans Houſe, the
ew-born child is dreſt up gorgeouſly, with fine
innen, ſcarlet mantle and Gold lace, and is as
ine as hands and money can make it. Though
God be the Father of all new-born Babes, yet
ome he dreſſeth like the children of the poor,
others like the children of rich men: as to
ome, he doth but cover their nakedneſs, that
t may not appear; but others he adorns, as
'tis expreſt in Ezek. 16. When the Prodigal
came home he put on the beſt robe, and the
King ('twas ſealing time very early) and the
Shoes of the preparation of the Goſpel on his
feet, and Bread and Fleſh, ſtrong meat to feed
him: when others it may be, though God
have compaſſion on them and take them into
his Family, and give them Milk to keep them
from periſhing with hunger, yet they have not
a King given them all their daies, nor any
thing but Milk to eat; and though they be
cloathed with the ſame righteouſneſs for kind,
yet 'tis not ſo embroidered, and ſet forth to
the eye, as the others was. The Church or
Spouſes garment is of diverſe colours. 'Tis a
time of Love, but God doth not tell them of
it, as he doth ſome as ſoon as he waſheth them
from their blood: The Father loves them,
though he do not kiſs them yet, as he doth
ſome

some others of his Children. Well, however bless him that he covers thy nakedness; though thou see not the riches of his grace laid out upon thee, yet that he forgives thee.

4. Consider this, that God is better pleased with that little grace, than he is displeased with that much corruption which is in thee (only do not like thy corruption the more, but love and praise thy God the better) Though thou be but as Gold in the Oar, God hath more regard to thee, than to throw away the Gold because of the Oar; Oh no, he will lose no Gold: The Disciples were little better than this, and yet he would not lose one of them, nor the least grain of grace that appeared in them; but made much of the willingness of their spirit when the bodily flesh was weak, and the corrupt flesh strong: Though they were but as *bruised Reeds and smoaking Flax*, yet he had not a little value for them; though there were more smoak than fire, yet he would not quench but cherish it. Though thy grace be little and thy corruption much, yet he will prize thee.

5. Think of this also, though thou have not assurance, yet thou hast that which will secure thee, and doth ensure thy Soul. Every grace is assuring in its nature and degree, though thou have not the evidence and comfort of it: and is it nothing to be safe? thou art upon the Foundation and shalt stand and not fall, for thou art in a state of blessedness; Eternal life is begun, and there is no falling from Eternal life, *This day is Salvation come unto thee* (as it did

did to *Zebeus*) *and it will never depart from thee.* This state is blessed, for so are they that mourn, and in due time they shall be comforted, *Matth.* 5. 3, 4. The beginnings of grace (though but poor and therefore mourners) is blessed, and it shall be blessed, as old *Isaac* said of *Jacob.* Poor weeping soul, thou little knowst what Joy there is in Heaven at thy weeping on earth, see *Luke* 15. 7. and again *Vers.* 10. and *Vers.* 32. Thy sighs make Angels sing: The crying of the Babe makes the Father laugh, as our saying is, and 'tis true of the heavenly Father; and all this is spoken of this first attainment of Babes, *viz.* Repentance. *Paul* rejoyced that he made the *Corinthian* Babes sorrowful, because they sorrowed to Repentance, which was to salvation, and never to be repented of, 2 *Cor.* 7. 9, 10. yea Jesus Christ seeing the travail of his soul safely delivered, rejoyceth that a man or woman child is born, though it be not yet any more than new-born: thy sorrow makes him forget his sorrow. Our Saviour after his Resurrection appeared to *Peter* before he did to the twelve, 1 *Cor.* 15. 5. and the Angel sent the first tidings of his Resurrection to *Peter*, *Mark* 16. 7. for he was repenting and weeping bitterly, which was as another Conversion to him, as our Saviour hinted to him before, *Luke* 22. 32. When the Incestuous person repented, *Paul* takes care that he may be comforted, lest he should be swallowed up of over-much sorrow, 2 *Cor.* 2. 7. Thus are we given to understand how precious the tears of Penitents are, and yet withal that

God would not that they ſorrow over-much. Though he love to ſee them ſwim in tears, yet he takes care that they may not be drowned (as the word notes) in tears: though he love a broken, *i. e.* a contrite heart, yet he would not that ſuch ſhould break their hearts, or deſpair and mourn as them that are without hope.

In *Cant.* 2. 14. the Spouſe was fallen to the ground, (for grief and ſorrow, as I take it) and hid her ſelf in the clefts of the rock and the ſecret places of the ſtairs, and the little Foxes (Satans temptations and wiles) did endeavour to ſpoil the Vine that had but tender grapes; but the Bride-groom, ſeeing her in this diſconſolate condition, beſpeaks her thus, *Riſe up my Love, my fair one and come away*, Verſ. 10. and again *Verſ.* 13. *Let me ſee thy countenance and hear thy voice; Mine O Lord, alas I dare not look up, I am ſo black*; as 'tis ſaid of the poor Publican, *Luke* 18. 13. that he ſtood afar off, and would not lift up his eyes to Heaven, but ſmote upon his breaſt and ſaid, *God be merciful to me a ſinner*: My countenance, O Lord, 'tis not worth looking on, ſaith this poor ſoul, theſe blubbered cheeks of mine and eyes ſtanding full of tears will not give me leave to look up: But ſaith he, *Let me ſee thy Face for it is comely*; I love it now the tears run down, I love to ſee it beſet with theſe Diamonds, and ſilver drops of tears, 'tis a precious ſight in my eyes; and therefore let me ſee thy face; yea and let me hear thy voice; My voice Lord, alas, *I can but chatter as the Crane*,

Crane, and mourn as the Dove; Oh let me hear this voice of thine, thy ſighs and groans are muſick and make melody in mine ears, let me therefore hear it, *For ſweet is thy voice and thy countenance comely*; *Riſe up my Love, my Dove, my fair one and come away: for lo the winter is paſt, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, the time of ſinging is come, and the voice of the Turtle is heard in our Land*; *The Fig-tree puts forth her green Figs, and the Vines with the tender Grapes give a good ſmell*; *I will take the Foxes that ſpoil the Vines, and preſerve the tender Grapes.* Thus may the dear and loving Jeſus (and oh that he would thus) ſpeak to thee, poor ſoul; that after thy *April* of ſhowers, thou maiſt have a month of *May* with all its flowers, and be able to conclude as the Spouſe did, *Verſ.* 16. *My beloved is mine, and I am his.* In the mean time, if thou hear not this joyful ſound, if thou have not Wine to drink, nor meat to eat, yet go thy way and eat thy milk with as merry an heart as thou canſt, for God accepteth thy work (even thy Repentance from dead works) to allude to that, *Eccl.* 9.7. only take not up here, but go on and believe too. And this brings me to ſpeak to the ſecond attainment of Babes, Faith towards God, which is another portion of the Milk they eat.

II. *Of their Faith towards God.*

THE second Principle of the beginning of Christ, which he calls Milk (and yet a foundation too) is faith towards God. The Object is *God*, the Act is *Faith*, the manner and power of its working is *towards*, and but *towards*, God: and how happily our translation hath used this word in this case and place, may the better appear, that this word (εἰς) is scarce used again (in relation to Faith) in all the Scripture, with an accusative case, and it denotes a tendency, and is therefore very well Englished, *Faith towards God*; and so this preposition (εἰς) is used, *Luke* 10.9. *The Kingdom of God is come nigh unto you*, or hath approach'd *towards* you, 'tis at hand; so this Faith is an approach, a coming towards God: it hath not attained its perfection and termination, but is in motion and tendency; these Babes, I speak of the lowest and weakest of Babes, cannot be so properly said to have closed, as to be closing with God; they are nigh and at hand, they are not so much said to be come, as to be coming; it notes a gradual, and but a gradual attainment; 'tis not a compleat and perfect act, but a begun and reaching Act; yet such as shall be compleated in its time, and is accepted for the present: for 'tis said, *Joh.* 6.37. *He that is coming to me* (so the Greek) *I will in no wise cast out.*

The Object of this Faith (you see) is God, *viz.* the Father, not in opposition to, yet

yet in distinction from the Son; for these Judaizing Christians, who were generally Babes, kept to the Old Testament Spirit, which was a Faith towards God, not without a respect to the Messiah; for as the Father and the Son act in the Soul (no man coming unto the Father but by the Son, nor any man coming to the Son, unless the Father draw him) so the Soul acts towards the Father and the Son, but yet mostly to the Father, as looking on him to be the person mostly offended, and with whom it stands in most need of reconciliation, and therefore makes its principal address to the Father, yet by Christ, or for the Lords sake, as *Daniel* speaks, *chap.* 9. 17. And upon this account the distinction is (and better known to grown Saints) that *Repentance is towards God, and Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ*. Acts 20. 21. or (in) unto God and unto Christ, as the words are. But the Babes being in great part ignorant of the union between the Father and the Son, in this work of grace to Salvation, as 'tis hinted to *Philip*, &c. *Joh.* 14. 8, ——12. and not considering that they are to honour the Son as they honour the Father, *Joh.* 5. 23. they usually let their Faith and its motions to be most towards God, without such distinct considerations of Christ, as united to and in conjunction with the Father, as the Object of Faith.

The soul being awakened (as I have formerly toucht) and made sensible that it hath displeased God by sin, and wrong'd it self, and that therefore it is unworthy to be ac-

cepted, and welcomed upon its own account, and withal that (being without strength and righteousness) it is unable to make its peace with God, and that if its peace be not made, it is undone, it makes addresses to him, upon a kind of common Faith that he is merciful, yet (if a Jewish Babe as of old) under the notion of a God that must be attoned by Sacrifices, (the types of Christ) and if a Gentile converted Babe, then in the name of Christ, though too much without the notion of him as the Lord our righteousness (for they are unhilful in that word) or being found in him having the righteousness which is by Faith, and so to rejoyce in Christ Jesus and to have no confidence in the flesh, either their birth priviledges, or own graces and duties and actual righteousness, such as 'tis : but they make toward him as well as they can. And therefore by the way, that act of Faith, which we call reliance, adherence, and recumbency, cannot be the first saving act that Babes put forth (which yet they afterward do) but being convinced by the teachings of God, *Joh.* 6. 45. concerning themselves (what was said newly) and that unless they believe in Christ Jesus they cannot be saved ; and concerning Christ Jesus that there is Salvation to be had by him and no other, *Act.* 4. 12. and that he came into the world to save sinners, 1 *Tim.* 1. 15. and that *whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting Life*, Joh. 3. 16. I say, being thus convinced, they do in some measure receive this report and witness of God (made

in

in and by the Gospel) and consequently in like measure receive Christ Jesus, and also come unto him; for by these two words (receiving and coming) is the first workings of Faith most usually expresst, *Joh.* 1, 12, 13. with *Joh.* 6. 35, 37, 44, 45, 47. compared. This is the beginning of their Faith, and (from this receiving, coming or addressing grows up in time reliance upon and trusting in him, though without an assurance that Christ is theirs and they are his) this I say, is saving Faith.

Seeing therefore the work of grace is (as experience generally shews) a confused thing (a kind of Chaos) at first, and many things are jumbled together without distinct considerations, and they go puddering on in a dark way; I shall therefore indeavour to shew the several workings of it, which it may be these souls will be better able to assent to, hearing it from others, and calling to mind what they have observed, than they will be able (otherwise) to discover and declare it themselves.

We see there are two persons that this Faith of Babes hath to do with, *viz.* God and Christ, though God especially and in the first place; now how it acts towards God and then towards Christ I shall indeavour to make plain and evident: and 1. How this their Faith acts towards God, *viz.* thus: 1. That God is and is a rewarder of them that seek him out; for as without this 'tis impossible to please God, so to come to God in a seeking and addressing

way, *Heb.* 11. 6. There is a Faith called coming, and there is a Faith preceding this coming, which is a believing that God is (for none would look after a non-entity or that which is not, or is not believed to be) and a believing that he is a rewarder of them that seek him; that they shall not seek in vain, if they seek in truth; now the Babe believes this in general, though it cannot yet see its coming and seeking to be such as shall be welcom and rewarded. As was the case of the woman of *Canaan*, and the Prodigal at first. 2. Babes believe this (as to God) that he can turn them, and save them if he please; and this believing his power (though not his will, as grown Saints do) is owned and accepted with great respect. When *Ephraim* was bemoaning himself, he saies, *Turn thou me, and I shall be turned*; and God presently saies, *Ephraim is my dear Son, a pleasant child. I will surely have mercy on him, saith the Lord. Jer.* 31. 18, — 20. So the Prodigal believed that his Father could (though he had spent all) yet set him up again, and that he might be a new-made-man. The Babe speaks like the Leper, *Lord if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean*, and it proved so. Yet believes there is grace and bread enough in Gods house; if he have but will, he hath power enough to pardon: the Question is not about his power but about his Will. Yet throughout the Scripture this is owned and accepted. We read of one poor man that came to Christ distrusting his power, but Christ puts him on believing *that* before he would do any thing for him;

im ; and when he did that, Christ did what he ame for, *Mark* 9. 22. *&c.* 3. Babes look rther, even to the promises of God, they nd many invitations and promises also, and ey have recourse to these, but do not so uch mind Christ, in whom all the promises f God are, yea and *Amen*, so that they do as were rest upon the Ark, but do not come into : whereas grown Saints, see Christ Jesus as e foundation and fulness of every promise, nd do not take up with the Cabinet without he Jewel, or with the Field, without the Pearl id in it. The Promises indeed are incouging means to Faith, but are not the Rest of e soul: Forgiveness of sins is not from the proise without Faith in Christ, *Acts* 26. 18. or eternal life it self, 2 *Tim.* 1. 1. nor righteusness, *Phil.* 3. Of this also the Babes have a eneral notion, and so they make toward Christ, ot with full sails, but with a side-wind as were ; and this I am now to shew, how

2. The Faith of Babes acts toward Christ Jes. And that 1. As the Son of the living God, to hom the Father hath given and committed all ings, and this is one of the things which is vealed unto Babes, as is clear by comparing *at.* 16. 16, 17. with *Mat.* 11. 25, 27. When *Peter* onfest Christ to be the Son of the living God, ur Saviour calls him blessed, and tells him hat not flesh and blood but his Father had reealed it to him: and in the other place blesseth is Father who had hid this (as other things) rom the wise and prudent, but had revealed hem unto Babes. 2. Babes believe that God

sent

sent his Son into the world to save sinners; and 'tis a degree of Faith that Jesus Christ accepts, and commends, *Joh.* 17. 8. Christ tells his Father of it by way of commendation, that his Disciples (as yet but Babes) had believed that he had sent him, *viz.* to be the Messiah to restore and redeem *Israel*, which though some of them understood (for a while) but carnally, yet they had it seems now a better notion of it, and in *Joh.* 16. 27. he tells them that his Father loved them, because they loved him and believed that he came out from God, *viz.* to repair the world. And though they have not yet such distinct notions of the Priest-hood of Christ, of his becoming sin for them that they might be made the righteousness of God in him, (both which are by imputation) yet this general Faith carries them towards Christ Jesus: this assent leads them to an addressing Faith, as appears in these following discoveries of it.

1. This Faith which they have (as to both God and Christ) puts it self forth in purposes and resolutions to go to God, though it be but on a probability or possibility (such as that of the Lepers, 2 *Kings* 7.) uncertain hope is preferred before certain danger and death: No sooner did the Prodigal believe that in his Fathers house there was bread enough, but (on this very account, though he knew not how he should speed) he would venture to go, rather than perish with hunger: and this was first in a purpose, *I will arise go*, &c. Well, saith the soul, I see this, if I live in my sins I must die,

(sin

(ſin and death keep company) but there is mercy with the Lord, he can forgive me, if it ſo pleaſe him; and 'tis *a faithful ſaying and worthy* to be received *that Jeſus Chriſt came into the world to ſave ſinners*; and though I cannot ſay God will be merciful to me, yet I will ariſe and go, I will adventure, and ſee what he will do with my poor Soul. And truely God takes this kindly (as 'twas ſaid of *David* about building the Temple, that 'twas in his heart to ariſe and go:) theſe firſt motions are very acceptable to God.

2. The Faith of Babes (toward God and Chriſt) puts it ſelf forth in Prayers; this Babe not only breaths but cries: as 'tis ſaid of *Paul*, *Behold he prayeth*, *Acts* 9. 11. This Faith goes with a petition in its mouth, as the Prodigal did, I will not only ariſe and go, but I will ſay too, I will confeſs my ſin, beg pardon, and withal a place in the houſe, though but that of a Servant. So the poor Publican, (yet afar off, as the Prodigal was) *Lord be merciful to me a ſinner*; and this much upon the general account of mercy (for hitherto (ſaith Chriſt of his Babes) ye have askt little or nothing in my name) and he went home juſtified, *Luke* 18. So that God pickt out Faith there, for by Faith (not by Prayer or Repentance) are we juſtified. This Faith puts purpoſes into Prayers, and Prayers into practice, for the Prodigal aroſe and *came*; and was welcom.

3. Therefore this Faith puts it ſelf in obedience, and in ſubmitting to ordinances, as Baptiſm, &c. as ſoon as any were new-born, I ſpeak

ſpeak *de adultis*, did believe in Chriſt, they were initiated by Baptiſm into the myſteries of Chriſtian Religion; and ſubmiſſion to this was (as to men) a proof of their Faith: and that this was the conſtant courſe appears not only by inſtances, but the Apoſtles conjoyning the doctrine of Faith with that of Baptiſms, &c. Thus by degrees doth the Faith of Babes creep and go towards God and Chriſt. But there are yet ſome more inward things, which theſe ſouls (ſome of them, for they are not acted all alike) do find in themſelves, though they can hardly expreſs them diſtinctly, or tell what to make of them. As,

1. If there be, (for they (ſome of them) are full of ifs and doubtings, fearing that there is no work, or that they are but Hypocrites) but ſay they, if there be any true work in us, and wrought by us, 'tis of God; we are wholly beholden to him for it. We cannot juſtifie and warrant our Repentance and Faith for ſound and good; but if there be any ſuch thing, 'tis wrought by God himſelf, for we are not ſufficient of our ſelves to think one good thought, in us there dwelleth no good thing. If we are accepted, ſurely 'tis of grace in the beloved. From their Prayers for mercy I conclude that they attribute all to mercy, and ſay, *Thanks be to God through Jeſus Chriſt*, as *Paul* did, *Rom.* 7. 'Tis, ſaith the poor Soul, 'tis the Lords mercy that I am not in Hell, and if ever I go to Heaven, I will admire grace and mercy.

2. There is this alſo in them, that they have a great

great value for Christ Jesus, though they cannot say that he is theirs, or that they are his: they think him the chiefest of ten thousand, and worthy to be beloved and believed in, though they have not attained him, so as to lie in his bosome, as *John* did and many others do. If they had ten thousand worlds, they would give it for him (*for as yet they are for buying and purchasing, more than for believing*) if he would but smile upon them, and kiss them with the kisses of his mouth, oh how would they love him! Higher Christians are rich in experiences, but these are rich only in wishes, desires and breathings. They so long after him, that they would be content to be (though but as hired Servants) any thing, in any condition, if he will but receive them; yea, if they may but gather the crumbs that fall under his Table, though they should not have the childrens bread bestowed upon them. If he would but let them know that they shall come to *Canaan* at last, or but open a door of hope for them, they would willingly go through the wilderness and the Valley of *Achor* too, and lay their mouth in the dust, if there may be but hope. If they may not have a full meal of joy in the Holy Ghost, nor rejoyce with joy unspeakable and full of glory, yet they will be thankful for some crumbs of comfort, and good hope through grace.

3. If these longings of theirs may not be satisfied, yet this they have fixed and rooted in them, that they would walk in this darkness and pain all their daies, rather than go back again

again to their old condition of living in sin. They will rather wait and beg at his doors to the death, rather than dwell in the tents of the most pleasant courts of wickedness. They will rather be Gods hired servants, than the Devils children, and live with the Swine of this world, that wallow in the mire and filth of sin and iniquity, as you may read in the returning Prodigal. No, no, they will not go back to Drunkenness and uncleanness, to impenitency and hardness of heart; but if they must perish, they will perish repenting and praying, &c. if they must starve, be it so at Gods door they will lie and beg, come of them what will: they will not go any where else for Salvation. Though he kill them, they will trust in him, and rely upon him.

4. Besides all this, you will find that these Babes will confess, that now and then they have some secret soul-supporting in-comes, but say they, We know not what to make of them nor whence they come, for they quickly depart again, and our fears return upon us notwithstanding. Sometime a word hath come and saluted them, but it passed by and went away. They will tell you, that they had such a (*bath col*) whisper in their Souls, my grace is sufficient for thee, or I have prayed that thy Faith fail not, &c. whence it came or whither it went they cannot tell, but alas this they can tell, that it vanished like an Eccho. The Disciples had many a support at times, yet even and anon were carking, fearing and doubting again, like (ὀλιγόπιστοι) them of little Faith.

So these poor Souls, though they have now and then a secret cordial given them, yet it doth but keep them alive, they are hungry, weak and faint still. Many such things as these are with them, and they are (to a grown and knowing Saint, who hath gone through them) very promising things concerning the future well-being of these Babes, though they themselves scarce gather hope or not more from them. Thus have I shewn how the Faith of Babes doth act, and after what manner they, some of them, the lowest and weakest Babes, eat this second portion of Milk, *Faith towards God*: before I shew the rest, I think it necessary to say something (as to this) by way of

Application.

1. *To such as are not Babes and have not*
2. *To such as are Babes and have*

} *Faith towards God.*

1. TO *such as are not Babes, and have not Faith towards God*; Without breach of Charity it may be feared that there are yet more than many, who though they profess Faith, do not believe; *The bleating of the Sheep, and lowing of the Oxen* (to speak in *Samuels* language to *Saul*) their living in sins doth witness against them. Surely he must be very prodigal of his Faith, and have a Creed very large and contradictory to that of the Apostles, who can believe unsanctified persons

to

to be Believers, when the very natural operation and effect of Faith is ſanctification, *Act.* 26. 18. to ſuch therefore would I ſpeak in Chriſt his own words, *Repent and believe the Goſpel*; take in therefore this Milk of the Word, that you may live and grow thereby.

Conſider I beſeech thee, 1. That not believing is an Argument of thy not being yet convinced of the ſinfulneſs of ſin, that thou art not yet awakened out of that dead ſleep, nor come to thy ſelf; for then undoubtedly thou wouldſt reſolve with the Prodigal to ariſe and go by Faith towards God, and confeſs thy ſin, and beg as the Publican, *Lord be merciful to me a ſinner.* If thou canſt ſin and ſleep in ſin, if thou canſt lie contentedly in a periſhing and damnable condition, and not cry out for Salvation, ſurely thou art in a moſt dangerous caſe, notwithſtanding thy name of Chriſtian; for what will it avail thee to have a name to live and yet be dead? If thou tell me thou haſt repented from dead works, I can Anſwer thee it cannot be ſo while thou art dead in ſins and walkeſt in them (for they are dead in ſin, who live in it) *Epheſ.* 2. 1, 2, 3. But beſide, if that were true that thou hadſt repented, yet know this, that righteouſneſs is not by Repentance but by Faith; ſo that if thou repent and do no believe, though thou be not far from the Kingdom of Heaven, yet thou art never the near, for the *one thing neceſſary* is wanting; and though thou ſeem too good to go to Hell, yet thou art not good enough to go to Heaven.

2. Con-

2. Consider this too that thou hast had and long had the means of Faith, *viz.* the Preaching and Hearing of the Gospel by which Faith comes: now what a sad thing is it to hear of Faith and not feel it, to be a hearer and not a Believer? Have ye not heard? yes the Gospel hath sounded loud and long in your ears. 'Tis sad when the Gospel comes to thee, and thou dost not come to God! when it comes in word and not in power! it had been better for thee thou hadst never heard, than to have heard and not believe. Better thou hadst never known the way of righteousness, than knowing it not to walk in it. 'Twill be more easie for *Turks* than for thee, according as 'twill for *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* in the day of Judgement than for *Capernaum*, as our Saviour speaks, *Matth.* 11. These things are said (as the Gospel is written) that you may believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his Name, *Joh.* 20. 31. And truly if you believe not the Gospel, neither would you believe if one should come from the dead; the more means of Faith, the greater condemnation if men do not believe, and greater means than that of Gods appointing there can be none. And then,

3. Consider this, that Christ may take his Gospel and be gone, & then the things of thy peace may be hid from thine eyes, thou maist die in thy sins and be damned for ever: to day therefore, while 'tis called to day (now or never, *i. e.* now or it may never be) hear his voice who calls thee to repent and believe the

Goſpel that thou maiſt be ſaved; which if thou do not, the ſame Goſpel ſaith, *He that believeth not ſhall be damned.* Canſt have patience to think of going to Hell? if not, believe. It were better thou hadſt never been born, than to die without being new-born: 'tis ſad to be dead in ſins, but to die in ſins, Oh who but them in Hell can tell how ſad it is! Hear therefore and believe that thy ſoul may live.

2. I am now to addreſs my ſelf to the Babes, eſpecially ſuch of them as lie under deſpondencies of Spirit; and to you I ſay as before, 1. Deſpiſe not the day of ſmall things: who knows to how great a tree this grain of Muſtard ſeed may grow? how great a fire this little ſpark may kindle? To how tall a ſtature a poor Babe may grow? though thou canſt eat but Milk, thou maiſt grow thereby. Thou haſt got down one portion of Milk more already, and art not only one that repenteſt from dead works, but haſt Faith alſo towards God. Though thou have no Wine, to make thine heart glad, nor oyl to make thy face to ſhine, nor bread to ſtrengthen thine heart, yet bleſs God that thou art alive and haſt milk to eat. For,

1. Conſider that thou art gone farther than thou art aware of, thou art nearer Heaven than thou thinkeſt for, in having Faith towards God: though thou be a great way off, yet thou art within thy Fathers ken and view, as 'tis ſaid concerning the Prodigal while he was yet afar off (but a coming, but beginning to come) his Father ſaw him, had compaſſion of him,

him, &c. the Father saw him before he saw the Father, and though he were but coming, yet 'tis said he was come; he arose and came, i. e. was a coming, for as yet he was afar off, and yet 'tis said he arose and came; his coming was lookt on as if he were come; as *Abraham* is said to offer his Son in that he did purpose and was about to do it, so the Prodigal and the Babe is said to be come, though as yet but coming towards God. It's something to be on thy legs, that thy journey is begun (*dimidium facti qui bene cœpit habet*) thou art on thy way, and thy Father sees it and hath compassion on thee, and as to Christ Jesus, he will never cast thee off, no by no means, see *John* 6. 37,—39.

2. If thou never go further than to be a Babe all thy dales, (suppose that) yet thou art gone far enough to be saved: by Faith we are saved, as safe as if we were saved. There is a blessing for this Faith, as before, *Matth.* 16 17. and Justification for this Faith, as before, *Luke* 18. 14. and God loves such Believers, as before from *John* 16. 27. 'Tis not a little remarkable, that blessedness is annexed to the lowest as well as to the highest Form in the School of Christ, as in the Beatitudes, *Mat.* 5. and to these *Hebrew* Babes the Apostle saith, *I hope better things of you* (than of some that had been inlightened, &c.) *and things that accompany* or contain *salvation* (though you be but Babes) *Heb.* 6. 9, 10. Salvation is not annexed to degrees (as such) but to truth of grace (as such) in the lowest degree,

John 6. 37. him that is but coming.

3. As weak as thy Faith is, the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it, thou shalt be kept through this Faith *by the power of God unto Salvation*, 1 Pet. 1. 5. This poor Soul is apt to scruple and say, Alas, my Faith is but small (if any) and I fear what will become of me in an hour of temptation, my strength is so small that I shall faint in the day of affliction. But the Lord saith to thee, Fear not, for though thou have but a little strength, yet because thou dost not deny his name, God will keep thee from the hour of temptation, or from the temptation of the hour, as it may be read, *Rev.* 3. 8, ——— 10. Though *Saul* pursue thee and hunt thee, yet the house of *Saul* shall grow weaker and weaker, and the house of *David* shall grow stronger and stronger, and the weak shall be as *David*, who notwithstanding his fear did not perish by the hand of *Saul*. Though thy enemies be strong and thy grace weak, yet thy weak grace shall be too strong for thy strongest enemies: Though the Sons of *Zeruiah* be strong, and in thine eyes too strong for thee, yet shalt thou die in peace. Maugre all the malice and power of Satan, the gates of Hell shall not prevail against thee, as Christ promised *Peter*, who believed as thou dost, that Christ is the Son of the living God, nor did it fail when Satan sifted him, for though he denied that he knew the man, he yet still believed that Christ was the Son of God, which was the Faith that Christ prayed might not fail. Let the rain descend, the floods come, and the winds

winds blow and beat (all together) upon thee, yet thy houſe ſhall ſtand, for 'tis founded (like Mount *Sion*) on a rock that cannot be moved, *Matth.* 7. 24, 25. Indeed if thy Faith alone were to buckle with Satan, 'twere *impar congreſſus* an unequal match, but thou art kept by the power of God, and the Prayer of Chriſt, ſo that there is more power for thee, than there is againſt thee, though it be all the power of Hell.

4. Theſe experiences which thou haſt at preſent are ſuch as none but a true Saint ever had or can have; the moſt exquiſite hypocrite that ever was, never attained to what thou haſt, *viz.* to be new-born and to be a Babe in Chriſt. To which of the Saints wilt thou turn? ask them one by one whether ever any that caſt themſelves upon the grace of God in Chriſt Jeſus (as thou doſt) did ever periſh, or that their hope was aſhamed? No, no, the hypocrites hope ſhall periſh, though he have gained a great name and repute, but thine ſhall not, though thou be but poor in *Iſrael*, and one of the leaſt of many thouſands. If thou canſt but Seal to the workings of Faith (before ſpoken of) and I know thou canſt if in Chriſt Jeſus, though but a Babe in him, I then ſay, 'tis more than the exacteſt, moſt ſtudied and poliſht hypocrite ever did or can attain to. An hypocrite may be gilded over, but thou art Gold; he may be enlightened, but thou art light in the Lord; he may grow up as the graſs, but thou as a tree planted and rooted in Chriſt Jeſus; he may ſeem to be, but thou art a

Christian: what ever may be counterfeited, the new-birth cannot be counterfeited. When the conceitedly rich *Laodiceans* shall be found poor, thou who art as *Smyrna*, poor in thine own eyes, wilt be owned for rich by God himself, *Rev.* 2. 9. *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven*, Matth. 5. 3. 'twas the first blessing that ever Christ pronounced with his mouth, that we read of, and 'twas spoken of such as thou art.

5. What ever thou think of it, yet 'tis a joy to good men and Ministers as 'twas to *John* (the bridegrooms friend) that thou and such as thou do hear the bridegrooms voice, and come unto him, *Joh.* 3. 26, 30. Yea our Saviour rejoyced in Spirit and thanked his Father too, that such things were revealed to Babes, *Luke* 10. 21. yea there is joy in Heaven at the return of the Prodigal, though he were but newly come home, just alive, just found and no more, yet behold what joy there is at his coming, *Luke* 15. the joy is not delayed and put off till he be grown up, but there's a feast for his birth-day, and joy that the man-child was born. His Fathers heart leapt for joy, when as yet he had not the robe, nor the ring put on, which followed afterward. Do not then reckon that small, which God makes so much of.

6. Thou wantest but the knowledge of thy happiness to make thee almost as happy as Angels: Thou art a Son, and if thou didst but know it, 'twere to be almost in Heaven. In Christ thou dost live, move, and hast thy being,

ing, and if thou didſt but know this, what a well-being wouldſt thou have? *Paul* in *Gal.* 4. 9. ſpeaking of Babes, ſaies they are rather known of God than know God: Indeed, what God is now a doing they know not, but they ſhall know hereafter, as Chriſt told *Peter*, Joh. 13 7. and when thou ſhalt come to know as thou art known, thou wilt be filled with admirations and raptures; in the mean time wait with patience: yet ſo, as,

2. Remember to preſs forward, that thou maiſt apprehend that for which thou art apprehended of Chriſt Jeſus, *Phil.* 3. 12. Seeing thou art in the way, keep on and mend thy pace; be not ſloathful (ſaith the Apoſtle to the *Hebrew* Babes) but followers of them (whoſe converſation is in Heaven, *Phil.* 3. 17, and 20.) *Who through Faith and Patience inherit the promiſes*, Heb. 6. 12. Grow in grace, not only by adding new acts of the ſame, and ſo perſevering to the end, but add Faith to Faith, for the *righteouſneſs of God is revealed from Faith to Faith*, Rom. 1. 17. Go on then from a Faith of addreſs to a Faith of reliance, and ſo on to the full aſſurance of Faith and Hope, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks to his Babes to do, *Heb.* 6. 11. *Ye believe in God believe in me alſo*, ſaith our Saviour to his, *Joh.* 14 1. If thou wilt grow in grace it muſt be by growing in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, as *Peter* tells his new-born Babes, 2 *Pet.* 3. 18. 'tis by being ſkilful in the Word of righteouſneſs, and having thy ſenſes exerciſed to diſcern between not only good and evil, but good and

better. Pitch on Christ more immediately and perfectly, and not only through the intervention and mediation of thine own graces: let not his attendants be so much in thine eye as the King of Glory himself; in thy graces thou maist see something of him by reflection, but in him thou wilt see perfect beauty, righteousness and strength.

Till thou come to this (or if thou shouldst never come to it) know for thy comfort, that 'tis no small thing to be known of God and accepted of him: God expresseth the priviledges of the old *Israel* by this, *You have I known above all people*: Gods knowledge is not like ours; we know this and that man, and he is little the better for it, it makes no alteration in him, but Gods knowledge is operative and efficacious: 'twas Gods consolation, that though he could not know the way of God, yet God knew the way that he took, and when God had throughly tryed him, he should come out like Gold, see *Job* 23.9, 10. This world is thy Furnace and Purgatory, and though thou know not what God is a doing, yet he knows that he is now purifying thee from thy dross, that thou maist be the pure and fine Gold. Yea though thou lie down in the dust of the grave in this state, yet he will raise thee up in glory, and when thou awakest thou shalt be filled with his Image. If in the mean time thou know not what to do, let thine eyes be to him, who is never at a loss nor out of his way, but is still carrying on his work to perfection, though it be in the dark to thee.

III. *Of their ſubmiſſion to Baptiſm, &c.*

THE two next things (of the ſix) which follow, are to ſhew not only the Doctrine which was taught to Babes, but alſo their ſubmiſſion thereunto, and are proofs (before men) of their converſion. As to the things themſelves (Baptiſmes and laying on of hands) there is ſome difference, if not Controverſie among Interpreters. Of the Doctrine of Baptiſm, (*gr.* Baptiſmes) ſome ſay this, that it refers to the ſeveral waſhings uſed by the Jews, one of which was with reference to the admiſſion of Proſelytes, to which Baptiſm ſucceeded; others, that it refers to both the outward and inward Baptiſm, that of water, and this of the Spirit. Of the Doctrine of laying on of hands; ſome ſay, that it refers to confirmation; others, to abſolution; others, to ordination, *&c.* It ſeems to be the practice of Chriſts Apoſtles after they had Baptized perſons (ſooner or later) to lay hands on them, by which gifts were conferred, *Acts* 8. 17. and 19. 4,— 6. with many other places: Now, whether the Doctrine of Baptiſmes may not refer to the Baptizing of Gentiles as well as Jews; and laying on of hands alſo refer to both (a thing which the Jews could hardly bear) I ſubmit to the conſideration of others. As to our preſent purpoſe (not to meddle with Controverſies) I do conceive that by theſe two things is noted in general, how Babes

do

do submit and give up themselves to the obedience of such institutions, duties and ordinances as they are capable and convinced of: And further than this I shall not handle the Doctrine of Baptismes, and laying on of hands: and this all agree in.

Babes do submit to such ordinances, and duties, as (I say) they are capable and convinced of, for of all they are not, nor are they required at their hands, till in a capacity: What ever Doctrine comes under the name of strong meat, they cannot bear. Our Saviour would not put meat into Babes mouths, no more than men would put new Wine into old Bottles; and therefore they were not put upon fasting, (for want whereof in part they could not cast out one kind of Devils, *Mat.* 17.19,--21.) till Christs departure and the descent of the Spirit, *Mat.* 9.14,--17. This duty of fasting (how formally soever used by the Pharisees) is a duty too strong for Babes to be put much upon. Our Saviour had many things (more) to say, which they could not bear till the Spirit came upon them, *Joh.* 16. 12, 13. they could hardly endure the doctrine of Christs death, *Matth.* 16. 21, 22. they understood it not, *Luke* 9. 44, 45. nor the doctrine of his Resurrection, *Mark* 9. 9, 10. nor that of his Ascension to the Father and Intercession for them, *Joh.* 16.16,——18. which are the strong meat that grown Believers feed upon (as they also afterward did) *Rom.* 8. 34. they were, while Babes, exceeding sorry at these things, *Matth.* 17. 22, 23. which yet were to turn to their greatest joy after they came to

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riper understanding of his Love and design herein, as Christ told them it should, *Joh.* 16. 9, —28. and so strong Believers find it, *Rom.* 8. 34, —39. he had some things also to tell them by way of Command, as that they should go and Preach to the Gentiles, Baptize and lay hands on them also, which as yet they could not bear: and while they were under this weakness, their first Commission was but for the Cities of *Judea*. Yea after Christs Ascension, *Peter* himself was not convinced but by a Vision, that they might go to the Gentles; and 'twas a matter of great admiration to the Jewish Converts (who generally were but Babes) that to the Gentiles God had granted Repentance to life, *Acts* 11. 18. and as they were Babes in point of gifts (for they were to do greater things after Christs Ascension than they could before, *Joh.* 14. 12. *viz.* such as we read of, *Mark* 16. 15, —20. which was much beyond (both for the persons to be Preached to, and things to be done by them in) the first Commission, *Matth.* 10. 1.) so were they Babes in grace also, (they were but of little faith, *Matth.* 6. 30.) they were very carnal in their apprehentions of Christs Kingdom, as if it had been of this world; they were very dull of hearing the Doctrine of his death, *&c.* as was toucht even now; there was much strife and envy among them; and a wrathful spirit calling for fire from Heaven; they were forward to promise, but not so to perform, for they could not watch with him one hour, *&c.* by which it appears they were as carnal and but Babes, not capable

capable of ſtrong meat for Doctrine or duty.

What they (Babes) are, and what they are not capable of or able to bear, I ſhall not undertake to determine, only this I am ſure of, that they are not to be received to doubtful diſputations (if that be the meaning of the place) *Rom.* 14. 1. of which I think the Magiſtrate gives a better account. But now, what they are capable of and convinced of, that they ſubmit to and act accordingly, *Acts* 19. There were Diſciples that had not heard whether there were an Holy Ghoſt or no, but as ſoon as they were convinced they ſubmitted. The Diſciples were not convinced of the Meſſiahs Offices, but in the general notion (without diſtinct apprehenſions of the manner and way) of reſtoring the world; and therefore till after his Aſcenſion, which proved theirs too, they had asked nothing in his name, *Joh.* 16. 24,——26. Chriſt indeed had declared his Fathers name (*The Lord gracious*) and taught them to Pray, *Our Father*, and tells God that they had kept his Word, and believed that he came out from him, as ſent by him, *Joh.* 17. 6,—— 8. but a more particular Faith in him, and praying in his name (was to be taught by the Spirit, and) were things they were not yet convinced of.

The great thing I have now to do is to ſhew, how and after what manner theſe Babes attend upon Ordinances and do their duties: which, alas, is in a very poor low way, the weakneſſes whereof God overlooks, and accepts their will for the deed (and better than that) many times.

1. They

1. They are more at duty than in it, and use Ordinances much, but make little use of them, and (if I may so speak) are very full of duties, but little dutiful; very little comes of all their attendance upon and addresses unto God, they are where and as they were still, little earnings do they make, God knows. They drive a great trade at hearing and praying, &c. hear precept upon precept, and line upon line; heap duty upon duty, but are very bunglers at it, and unprofitable after it. Like young children that make many meals, eat all the day long, and spoil as much as they eat, they mangle and crumble what is set before them, and dwindle away their time without feeding. Thus it was with the *Hebrew* Babes, they did eat and eat, yet were alwaies in need of milk, they do not, cannot walk in the strength of their meat (as the Prophet did) but are hungry again presently; the Word profits them little because not mixed with Faith, they have a bad digestion, and as ill a concoction; so that though they eat much, they are lean from day to day. The Disciples who heard Christ Jesus Preach so often were yet (like the *Hebrews*) dull of hearing, and ever and anon were to know the meaning of this and that very plain and easie Similitude and Parable with which Christ taught them, and understood not this and the other saying. They were so unacquainted with praying, that they must needs have a Form of Prayer, or a Directory set before them. Though the Jews fasted often, yet to God not at all or very little; they abound

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in performances, and keep on the road a round of duties, yet make no riddance no work of it; there is little Faith in their believing, little love in their loving, little obedience in their obeying: there is much of quantity, but little of quality; there is a great bu of duties, but little of Spirit and life in them their much is little.

2. They are very apt to place Religion i and to confine it to some certain duties, and say, *'Tis good to be here* (as *Peter* did) n knowing what they say. They are apt to thin that nothing is duty (and that they must scarc do any thing else) but to hear and pray: if may allude to what is said of the Pharisees, *Matth.* 23. 23. they are exact and punctual a positives, but defective in morals, they too much neglect the weightier things, as Faith and Love, *&c.* whereas a grown Christian sees that the great part of his duty is in a faithful discharge of his particular calling, in buying and selling, eating and drinking, and doing all he doth (from the highest to the lowest duty) to the glory of God. The Babes are, as I may say, hearing and praying Christians, and so are the grown Christians also, but withall they are doing and practising Christians which the Babes are but a little acquainted with. When Jesus Christ had cast a Devil out of a man, he that had been possest prayed that he might be with him, but Christ had other work for him to do, *Mark* 5. 18, 19. so these Babes cry to be with him (for so they call being at Sermons and Prayers) little considering that they may

serve

ſerve him better in being elſewhere many times: theſe things ought ye to do, and not to leave the other undone, ſay I to the Babes, as Chriſt did to the Phariſees. Conſtant walking with God, and finiſhing the work he hath given us to do, is the beſt being with him, and therein properly is our communion with him (to which hearing and praying is but relative, as means and helps to ſuch an end) 1 *Joh.* 1. 6, 7. Oh that Babes would learn this. For young beginners think they muſt lay almoſt all aſide in compariſon of hearing and praying, as if following their callings, and doing the work of their places were nothing to this, but (as *Spira* thought at the beginning) that they muſt lay aſide all and live upon providence: whereas the excellency of a grown Saint is much in this that he divides his work aright, and gives every one its portion in due ſeaſon, for then 'tis beautiful; and ſo is he (in this ſenſe alluding to 2 *Tim.* 2. 15.) approved of God, a workman that needeth not to be aſhamed.

3. They are apt to place more in Ordinances and duties, and to look for more from them, than God hath placed and put in them. They go to them as *Rachel* to *Jacob*, *Give me Children or I die*; but they may Anſwer (as he did her) *Am I in Gods ſtead? if God ſhut who can open?* Poor Babes, if they have not what they have a mind to, they take pet, are ſullen and diſcontented; what ſhould I hear, pray and wait for? they did look for joy, but none came; they went to hear the joyful ſound, but heard it not; they went to the Lords Feaſt, as to a ſealing

a ſealing ordinance, but found no impreſſion of its Seal: and therefore are apt to complain why ſhould I go any more? but let me tell you this is your Babiſhneſs: as that King ſaid to the Woman who came to him for help, ſo may Ordinances ſay to you, how can we help if God do not help? God hath not called Ordinances and duties your comforters, but his holy Spirit is the comforter; the partaking of the Lords Feaſt doth not Seal, 'tis the Spirits office: God never intended that you ſhould make Gods and Saviours of his Ordinances, but that you ſhould look through them and above them, while you uſe them; grown Saints do ſo: they go to (and alſo go from) a duty and ordinance to God himſelf: They know 'tis not the man that ſpeaks the word, nor the word that man ſpeaks, but God that works. They go to them as to Gods Wells and Conduit pipes, which they know have no water but from the Fountain, in whom all their freſh Springs are, and from whom all their fruit and increaſe is, 1 *Cor.* 3. 6, 7. *Pauls* planting, and *Apollo's* watring comes to nothing, if God do not give the increaſe by his bleſſing.

4. Babes (ſome of them) are too prone to think that they deſerve ſomething at Gods hand by what they do (being yet under the bondage of hired Servants, and an Old Teſtament legal frame) they do not ſo much work righteouſneſs, but they as much work for righteouſneſs: they think to pray and weep themſelves into the Love of God, and are as carnal men, who think to be heard for their much

much and long speaking, they are much for vows and Covenants, they set tasks on themselves; so many Chapters, so long at Prayers, &c. But if they fail of their expectation, then they are apt to say, What profit is there if we keep his Ordinances? and what gain if we draw nigh unto him, and have hands laid on us? and why have we afflicted our Souls, &c. like them in *Isa.* 58. 2, 3. If they do any thing with inlargedness, and as they think better than ordinary, they then conclude (as *Leah* did, *Gen.* 30. 20.) *God hath endowed me with a good Dowry, now will he dwell with me, for I have born him Six Sons*; and they call their duties *Zebulun's*, i.e. dwellings. If they find some enlargement in duty and bring forth such things plentifully, then say they, shall we have something from Heaven to day, a smile or a token for good, because we have prayed with sighs and tears as well as groans to day, and attended upon Ordinances with longings to day; now we shall be Gods darlings, surely he will make much of us? they being ignorant of Gods (word of) righteousness, go about to establish their own, and look for acceptance and manifestations of love from their humblings and Prayers (which is to be had in, by and through Christ only) and so they attain it not, because they seek it not by Faith, but as it were by the works of the Law, *Rom.* 9. 31, 32. with 10. 2, 3, 4. Their hopes of Heaven, and thoughts of Gods love do flow and ebbe, are higher or lower, according to the workings of their heart in

 their

their duties: They rejoyce in these things as the Disciples did at the subjection of Devils, more than (as grown Saints do) that their names are written in Heaven, *Luke* 10. 17, 20.

They promise themselves great matters from their performances, and submission to Ordinances, as if *opus operatum* the work done did deserve something: My beloved I speak not these things to shame you, but (as *Paul* did to his *Corinthian*-Babes) as my beloved ones to warn and instruct you, 1 *Cor.* 4. 14. and therefore to clear this a little more, I intreat you to observe, that when Christ had told the young man that if he would leave all and follow him, he should have treasure in Heaven, *Matth.* 19. 21. almost immediately thereupon, *Peter* said unto him, *Vers.* 27. *Behold we have left all and followed thee, what shall we have therefore?* this was a Babish expression, as if they had deserved some great matter: pray what was this *all* he talks of? 'twas a great *all* indeed! a poor little Fisher Boat, and an old Net, &c. and was not this worthy to be ushered in with a *behold?* and concluded with a *what shall we have therefore?* Alas poor Babes, they thought themselves very profitable servants, as our Saviour intimates to them, *Luke* 17. 7, &c. to what purpose doth Christ tell them this story, but to let them know that he owes them no thanks, that they are servants to whom he is not beholden, for they had done but what was (and not all that was) their duty to do, and therefore makes the Application, *vers.* 10. so likewise

wise ye, when ye have done all things commanded ye to do, say (sit down and write at the end of your accounts) we are unprofitable Servants. Thus he reproved them for expecting a reward as due; Christ will reward them, not as debt, but by the gift of grace.

Take now a grown Saint, and he looks upon his all to be so little, and his best so bad, that he knows himself in debt to God, and not God in debt to him: he gives God but his own, what he first received, and which is still Gods due, and never thinks that he merits by paying his debts and doing what is his duty to do. When such an one hath done any thing for God, he is so far from demanding a reward of debt, that he looks for it only as a gift, as *Paul* did, 2 *Tim.* 4. 7, 8. and doth not attribute the reward only to gift and grace, but all the duty and work which he hath done, and thanks God for it too, 1 *Cor.* 15. 10. he looks on himself as needing Christ Jesus for his acceptance, not only after his ill doing, but after his well doing, and would not be found in any righteousness but that which is by Faith for all the world, *Phil.* 3. 9. when he hath done all his duty, he looks upon himself as an unprofitable servant, as well as he doth when he falls short of doing all his duty, or as if he had not done any thing at all, as they *Matth.* 25. 37.

5. They too often value Ordinances according to the dispenser and administrater of them. Some of the *Corinthian* Babes gloried that they were Baptized by *Paul*, others that it was by *Apollo*, others that 'twas by *Cephas*, 1 *Cor.* 1. 12, —16.

12,——16. So as to Preaching, they are apt to confine God to such a man or such a sort of men; and like the same truth better if one man deliver it, than if another; and had rather receive the Sacrament (as 'tis called) from such a man, than from such a man: thus Babishly partial are these poor Babes. 'Tis true indeed God may make one mans Ministry more useful than anothers, and that doth much indear the man and his Ministry to such persons as have sate under it and felt it: but when people are divided by this and puffed up for one against another, 'tis then (as carnal) as I shall shew hereafter, and the Apostle chides them for it, as for a Babish trick, 1 *Cor.* 3. 4. and 1 *Cor.* 4. 6. When men are not taken with the Ordinance as Gods, but as mans, 'tis Babish; as 'tis noble indeed to receive the Word not as mans but Gods, 1 *Thes.* 2. 13. to overvalue one and undervalue another, or to value the Word of God for the mans sake, is a foolish and Babish thing. Take a grown spiritual Christian, and so he be built up in the holy Faith, and taught the way of God more perfectly, teach him *Paul*, or teach him *Apollo*, or *Cephas*, 'tis all one to him, yea though it be *Aquila* and *Priscilla*, Acts 18. 24.——26. Babes cannot say so, they must hear their *Paul*, *Apollo*, *Cephas*, or no body: so if they be to joyn in Prayer, they are dull and dead if such or such an one do not pray and be their mouth to God: whereas an intelligent Saint it may be finds more, much more of Gods Spirit breathing in one, that these Babes cannot have the patience

to

to hear. Many more such things are with you, poor Babes, but as yet I spare you.

6. These Babes are sometimes sensible of their weakness and inability as to outward performances, but are not so much observant and sensible of their inward defects, as secret pride and confidence in what they seem to do well at any time: they say, as the Disciples, *Why could not we cast him out?* Matth. 17. 19. they were aware that there was a defect of power, for they attempted to do it, but could not: yet when at other times the Devils were subject to them, there was a spice and rang of pride attended their rejoycing at it, *Luke* 10. 17. 21. and though Christ thanked his Father for what they had received, yet he calls them Babes, *Vers.* 21. this word *us*, the Devils are subject to *us*, seems to take away a share from Christ, though they say, through thy name. And you shall find that after they had received the Spirit and were grown to a more spiritual condition, that they wholly lay the *us* aside and give all the glory to God in Christ, *Acts* 3. 12, 13. why gaze ye on, as if *we* by *our* power, *&c.* God hath glorified his Son Jesus. Now you see the *us* is laid aside, and they do not run shares with Christ as they did before. So 'tis with Babes as to ordinances and duties, they find a weakness, they cannot do what they endeavour to do, to will is present but to do they have not power, this they are aware of; but now, when they meet with any power and stirrings and inlargements, they are apt to be lifted up, and if not to rest n

them, yet to divide the glory between God and themselves; till they grow up, and then they say, *Not I but Christ liveth*; not I but the grace of God; and not to us, not to us, but to thy name be all the glory. But I pass from hence to speak a little to these Babes by way of

Application.

THese things being so (which you cannot well deny, poor Babes) let me bespeak you and exhort you,

1. To Consider not only what you ought to do, but how you ought to do it, not only the matter but the manner of all duties; and to measure your obedience more by the quality than the quantity, the weight than number of it, together with what ends you have in it: 'tis not the bigness or juiciness of the fruit, but the relish that gives the commendation, and that is the end you have in doing your duties. If thy obedience have not a good relish (*ad gustum Dei*) if it do not taste well, though thy duties be never so many and well coloured and full of enlarged affections, they are not acceptable to God, nor a sweet smelling savour to him. The usual question that Babes make is about the *what* of duty, *what* shall we do? say they, *Acts* 2. *what* must I do, saith the Jaylor? Lord, *what* wilt thou have me to do? saith *Paul*. They mind the matter of duty and ask often about the *what*: but as we should mind *what* to hear and do, so *how* to hear and do.

do. We ſhould not only receive the Lords Supper, but ſo as to diſcern the Lords Body; not only pray, but pray according to his Will; not only ſubmit to Baptiſm, &c. but mind the *how* and *why*, as *Rom.* 6. 3, —— 5. *Col.* 2. 11, —— 13. God doth not look ſo much to the hand as to the heart, to the action as to the Spirit by which, and the end for which 'tis done. The rich men threw in much more for quantity than the Widdow, yet her Mite was more than their abundance: there may be more of prayer in a ſhort Ejaculation, than a long prayer of many words. God is taken more with a little well done, than with much good done: *Deus magis delectatur adverbiis quam nominibus*; adverbs ſet out God beſt, as all that he did was good *exceedingly*, and Jeſus Chriſt is not only true, but (ἀληθῶς) truly bread: ſo adverbs ſet out our beſt, when we do what we do, truly, ſincerely, faithfully, &c. for theſe expreſs the Spirit and end of duties.

A little Gold refined is more worth than much in the Oar, and one Diamond hath more of value in it than a heap of common ſtones. A contracted Prayer may have more in it than a long one; not that I ſpeak againſt the inlargedneſs of any perſons affections in duty, for if God opens who can ſhut? but that none ſhould place the excellency of a duty in length, or meerly in fervency, for many things may occaſion it, when it may not be fervency of ſpirit wrought by the Spirit of God. 'Tis not how much but how well, not how affectionate but how ſpiritual, that God minds: many

Lads when they begin to write, ſtrive to write much, but ſaith their Maſter, write me two lines well and I will take it better, than if you ſcribble and ſcrawle a ſide of Paper: *Sat' & ſat' cito ſi ſat' bene.* 'Tis not worſhipping at *Jeruſalem* but in ſpirit and truth that God minds; and as 'tis to place, 'tis to bulk, To what purpoſe is the multitude of your ſacrifices? 'Tis a broken heart that I will not deſpiſe. The Apoſtle doth not take care only to pray or ſing, but to do it with underſtanding and his Spirit alſo, 1 *Cor.* 14. 15. ſpiritual things ſhould be done ſpiritually; we ſhould not only do the things which are pleaſing to God, but do them ſo that the doing of them may be pleaſing to him; his Will according to his Will.

2. Conſider what is the true ſtate, condition and deſign of Ordinances and Duties; they are not your food, but the diſhes in which your food is ſet before you; not the water of Life, but the Conduit pipes through which 'tis conveyed to you; 'Tis not the end of Ordinances and duties that you ſhould make them your end; no, they are but means to an end: would you take up with food or Phyſick without health? why then with Ordinances without the power, bleſſing and effects of them? Though I ſpeak not this to take you off from Ordinances and Duties, yet that you may not look for that there which God hath not placed there, nor have that value for them and truſt in them which is due to the God of Ordinances: live not without Ordinances, but live above them while you uſe them.

3. Be

3. Be more universal in your obedience and do not confine Religion to certain daies and duties: God is the universal good, and we are most like him, when we are universally so: *Then shall we not be ashamed, when we have respect to all his Commandments,* Psal. 119. 6. 'Twas the great commendation of *Zachary* and *Elizabeth*, that they walked in all the Commandments and Ordinances of God without blame. They did not pick and choose some, make *ifs* and *ands* as to others; but were indeed lovers of all. And here is love that we keep his commands, *viz.* all of them, and they (not any of them) are not grievous, 1 *Joh.* 5. 3. Every creature is good in one or other respect, they are particular goods, this or that; but God (as I said) is all good, and doth good to all: all his commands also are holy, just and good, and we should study to know, & do all the good and acceptable and perfect Will of God, *Rom.* 12. 2. to be as like God, — and to do all that God likes, as much as possible.

4. Observe the proper season of Ordinances and Duties, of Hearing and Praying, *&c.* every thing is beautiful in its season: 'Tis the glory of the Tree planted by Preaching, watred by Baptism, blessed with the laying on of hands, to bring forth fruit in season; for as it follows (*Heb.* 6. 7.) the earth which drinketh in the rain, that cometh oft upon it (precept on precept, and line on line) and bringing forth herbs meet (suitable and seasonable) for them by whom it is dreſt, receiveth blessing from God; which refers to the Parable of the good

good ground hearers, as what follows, *Verſ.* 8. refers to the thorny ground. There is a time for all things, and becauſe man knoweth not his time, his ſorrows are great upon him: 'tis unſeemly for a man to mourn in a time of joy, as 'tis to rejoyce in a time of mourning. To ſpeak more to Babes, 'tis not beautiful becauſe not ſeaſonable to be praying in a time that calls for another duty, or to be hearing when it may be ſome duty in your calling or Family calls upon you to be then and there to mind that. Babes are too apt to rob *Peter* to cloath *Paul*, to take from one duty and give to another, therefore I ſpeak thus unto them.

5. Do what you do more out of ingenuity than fear, and more out of thankfulneſs and gratitude than cuſtom or conſtraint. Many carnal ones come as the people cometh, company, cuſtom, and the Bell, more than Conſcience, tolls them to Ordinances; and too often Babes in Chriſt are in this as carnal, that ſometimes they do not ſo properly come as are driven and forced to Ordinances and duties: There is a thing called Conſcience which when 'tis awakened keeps a great deal of do; and when men are convinced of ſin they will do almoſt any thing for eaſe and quiets ſake; and when they have been uſed to hear and pray and have found ſome relief by it, they are under a kind of bondage and dare not omit it (though perhaps it be not a ſeaſon) for fear Conſcience ſhould flie in their face, they are afraid 'twill chide and whip them; and therefore to prevent this they will to hear and pray, &c.

Yea,

Yea, but if thou wilt do any thing well, do it from a better nature, from ingenuity, and a child-like spirit, as one sensible what obligations lie upon thee not to sin and to be dutiful, though there were no threatnings nor terrors that attended the omission of good nor commission of evil.

6. Go on to attend upon and address to God in the way of his Ordinances and your Duties, though you should not meet with all that incouragement which you look and long for: commit your selves to God in all waies of well-doing, though you have not such joyes and ravishments as some have and you desire. Do not serve God meerly for incomes and Revenues, be more generous and noble, and think it a great honour that thou canst serve him and do thy duty. 'Tis true, God hath made all our duties priviledges, and in as well as after keeping his Commands there is great reward, his service is not only a means but a part of our happiness; yet we serve him best when we do our duty, more as duty which refers to God, than as priviledge which refers to us: and a generous soul will serve God and thank him that it may, and more that it can, though it have not a penny for its pains and labour, though it should bear the burden and heat of the day. 'Tis not an ingenuous child that will not be obedient longer than it is allured and bribed by fine things.

'Tis a greater honour to us that we serve God, than 'tis to him that we do serve him; as 'twas to *Solomon*'s servants more an honour that they waited

waited on him, than 'twas to him to be waited on by them: *Blessed are thy Servants*, said the Queen of *Sheba*. 'Tis a blessing to be dutiful, beside the blessing that is to come after we have been dutiful. Take you care for duty, and God will take care for your comfort: *Only*, mark that *only* let your conversation be as becometh the Gospel, take care for nothing but that, *Phil.* 1. 27. 'tis said of Christ, *Isa.* 49. 3, 4, 5. *Thou art my Servant O Israel, by whom I will be glorified*; Now, though he laboured in vain (as to the Jews) in great part, yet his judgement, work and reward was with the Lord; as the Apostles also were a sweet savour unto God, though some perished, 2 *Cor.* 2. 15. Comfort thy self with this (if thou receive no other comfort) that thou art doing thy duty, the work that God hath given thee to do. Thou hast been often at Ordinances and duties, and thou hast said, Oh that I might see God as well as seek him, and yet he hath not lifted up the light of his countenance upon thee; well, yet be glad that he hath kept thee in way of duty: thou hast need of more patience yet (it may be) that after thou hast done the Will of God thou maist enjoy the Promise. However do thou go on to serve him, and make it appear that thou dost it not out of constraint or for lucres sake, but of a ready, and generous mind, to allude to that, 1 *Pet.* 5. 2. and if thou find any duty too hard for thee, pray as the Disciples did, when Christ bid them forgive seven times (a hard duty) *Lord increase my Faith*, Luk. 17. 5.

much

much and great Faith will help thee to do much and great work.

7. And laſtly, look to Jeſus Chriſt and rowl thy ſelf on him notwithſtanding thou do all things well. We need not only a Chriſt for the doing of duty, without whom we can do nothing, *Joh.* 15. 5. and through whom we can do all things, *Phil.* 4. 13. But we need a Chriſt for the acceptance of what we do; even our fruits of righteouſneſs are not acceptable, but by him (in whom we are accepted) our moſt ſpiritual ſacrifices muſt be offered on this Altar and by it ſanctified, 1 *Pet.* 2. 5. *Rev.* 8. 3. We need a Chriſt not only to bring us to God at firſt, but alwaies and for ever. As our ſin is pardoned, ſo our duties are accepted for Chriſt his ſake. Chriſt is all and in all. Do all thou canſt as if there were no Chriſt, and after that relie on Chriſt as if thou hadſt done nothing, as well as thou didſt or ſhouldſt at firſt when thou hadſt done nothing. In him and with whom, and what's in him, is God well pleaſed.

The ſecond Uſe is for conſolation to theſe Babes; though I have in this part ſhew'd your lowneſs and weakneſs, yet I have a word two or three of Conſolation for you. As,

1. God will ſeparate the precious from the vile, the Gold from the droſs, he will pick out the beſt and make much of it, though it be but little: and for what thou judgeſt thy ſelf, thou ſhalt not be judged of the Lord, as the Apoſtle tells his Babes, in 1 *Cor.* 11. 31. in relation to their odd and ill way of attending upon that great

waited on him, than 'twas to him to be waited on by them: *Blessed are thy Servants*, said the Queen of *Sheba*. 'Tis a blessing to be dutiful, beside the blessing that is to come after we have been dutiful. Take you care for duty, and God will take care for your comfort: *Only*, mark that *only* let your conversation be as becometh the Gospel, take care for nothing but that, *Phil.* 1.27. 'tis said of Christ, *Isa.* 49. 3, 4, 5. *Thou art my Servant O Israel, by whom I will be glorified*; Now, though he laboured in vain (as to the Jews) in great part, yet his judgement, work and reward was with the Lord; as the Apostles also were a sweet savour unto God, though some perished, 2 *Cor.* 2.15. Comfort thy self with this (if thou receive no other comfort) that thou art doing thy duty, the work that God hath given thee to do. Thou hast been often at Ordinances and duties, and thou hast said, Oh that I might see God as well as seek him, and yet he hath not lifted up the light of his countenance upon thee; well, yet be glad that he hath kept thee in way of duty: thou hast need of more patience yet (it may be) that after thou hast done the Will of God thou maist enjoy the Promise. However do thou go on to serve him, and make it appear that thou dost it not out of constraint or for lucres sake, but of a ready, and generous mind, to allude to that, 1 *Pet.* 5. 2. and if thou find any duty too hard for thee, pray as the Disciples did, when Christ bid them forgive seven times (a hard duty) *Lord increase my Faith*, Luk. 17. 5.

much

much and great Faith will help thee to do much and great work.

7. And lastly, look to Jesus Christ and rowl thy self on him notwithstanding thou do all things well. We need not only a Christ for the doing of duty, without whom we can do nothing, *Joh.* 15. 5. and through whom we can do all things, *Phil.* 4. 13. But we need a Christ for the acceptance of what we do; even our fruits of righteousness are not acceptable, but by him (in whom we are accepted) our most spiritual sacrifices must be offered on this Altar and by it sanctified, 1 *Pet.* 2. 5. *Rev.* 8. 3. We need a Christ not only to bring us to God at first, but alwaies and for ever. As our sin is pardoned, so our duties are accepted for Christ his sake. Christ is all and in all. Do all thou canst as if there were no Christ, and after that relie on Christ as if thou hadst done nothing, as well as thou didst or shouldst at first when thou hadst done nothing. In him and with whom, and what's in him, is God well pleased.

The second Use is for consolation to these Babes: though I have in this part shew'd your lowness and weakness, yet I have a word two or three of Consolation for you. As,

1. God will separate the precious from the vile, the Gold from the dross, he will pick out the best and make much of it, though it be but little: and for what thou judgest thy self, thou shalt not be judged of the Lord, as the Apostle tells his Babes, in 1 *Cor.* 11. 31. in relation to their odd and ill way of attending upon that great

great Ordinance of the Lords Feast, or Supper, as we render it. He will put thy tears into his Bottle, he will remember thy thinking on his name, when others said, *It is in vain to serve God, and what profit is there that we have kept his Ordinances*, Mal. 3. 14, —— 18. Thou hast toil'd all day and caught nothing, yet at his command thou hast cast in thy Net again, and hast caught a great draught, but some are good and some are bad; why, though it be so, yet God will separate the good from the bad, he will gather the good into his Vessels, and cast the bad away, that I may allude to the story of *Peter's* Fishing, joyned with what is said, *Matth.* 13. 47, 48. In the story of *Sarah*, *Gen.* 18. 12, —— 15. what grace could you find there? and yet God doth, and 'tis recorded, 1 *Pet.* 3. 6. that *Sarah* called her Husband *Lord*, which she did at that time, when the Angel chid her both for unbelief and telling a lye too. When the Disciples failed of their duty and promise to Christ, he yet picks out this, that their spirit was willing, *Matth.* 26. 41. He takes it ill that they did not watch, yet takes it well that 'twas in their heart, and they were willing to watch: and though they had often miscarried, yet our Saviour puts a better interpretation upon them, than they (or any body else) could, and tells his Father, *They have kept thy Word*, Joh. 17. 6. When *David* prayed God to hear his voice, *Psal.* 130. 2. he brings in that which (at first view) seems to be a strange Argument, *Vers.* 3. *If thou shouldst mark iniquities, who shall stand?* he tells

tells God of his iniquities which might stand as a cloud between God and him, *But 'tis an excellent way to confess our sins when we make our Prayer*, and then they shall not hinder good things from us, because God will not mark them, when we do, for *Vers.* 4. there is forgiveness with him that he may be feared: and for this reason and in this way, he doth, *Vers.* 7. exhort *Israel* also to hope in God, for with him is mercy, yea plenty of it. And so he sayes, *Psal.* 103. 8. and infers from thence that God will not alwaies chide, *Vers.* 9. Yea that *as a Father pitieth his* (poor, weak and defective) *children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him, for he knows their frame* as well as their frailty, *Vers.* 13, 14.

2. I tell thee this for thy comfort, that though thou sin in falling so short of righteousness, yet thou hast an Advocate with the Father (both his and thine) *Jesus Christ the righteous*, who is the propitiation for thy sin, 1 *Joh.* 2. 1, 2. The first design of writing this, is, that you may not sin, but if any man of you that come under the name of (τεκνία) Sons, though he be but a Babe, if any of you sin, *We* (from the highest to the lowest) *have an Advocate*, who is the Lord our righteousness, and by whose righteousness our sins shall be taken away: for he will never give over making intercession till he have saved to the utmost, which he is able to do, because he ever lives to make intercession for all that come to God by him. And therefore when the Apostle had said in *Rom.* 8. 34. *Who shall condemn?* he doth not barely

barely say, *Is is Christ that died*, or rather that is *risen again*, or moreover that *he sits at the right hand of God*, but also that *he maketh Intercession for us*: this secures all the rest, 'tis the utmost compleating Act of our High-Priest, and whereby he saves to all intents and purposes, perfectly or to the utmost.

3. Take this word of Consolation also, there is a Resurrection and Eternal Judgement to come, after which though thou shalt not rest day or night from serving God in a way of Praise, *Rev.* 4. 8. yet thou shalt rest from thy labour, and serve him no more in a way of pain as now thou dost, *Rev.* 14. 13. And in the mean time, though thy soul lie under the Altar, yet it shall not sleep, though it be at rest, but it shall be clad with white and glorious robes, *Rev.* 6. 9, ——11. And the God of all Grace after the sufferings of the brother-hood (as the word is) shall be accomplished, this same God of all Grace, who hath called you into, will instate you in his Eternal Glory by Christ Jesus, and perfect all that concerns you, 1 *Pet.* 5. 9, 10. Then shalt thou keep an everlasting Sabbath or rest with God, and that without interruption or distraction, and sing Songs with *Moses* and the Lamb for ever: Comfort your selves and one another with these words, 1 *Thes.* 4. 18. *The Resurrection and Eternal Judgement shall come and will not tarry.* And this brings me to the next things mentioned as foundation doctrine, and some of the Milk which Babes suck in, *viz.*

IV. *The*

IV. *The Resurrection of the Dead, and Eternal Judgement.*

THis these Babes do believe with an operative Faith, which hath an influence upon their practice and Conversation, and so denotes a further attainment of theirs; they do not only submit to Ordinances for a time, the time of their Life, but they believe another Life after this is over, and that time is but a forerunner of and Prophet for Eternity. Faith is for Eternity: The belief of a Resurrection supposeth dying, and Eternal Judgement supposeth that man is to be accountable for his living here in time, and that as he Sowes he shall Reap: He believes and is Baptized to no purpose that doth not believe an after and Eternal state, as the Apostle concludes, 1 *Cor.* 15. So then the Babes in Christ do not only repent from dead works, or only act Faith towards God, or submit to Ordinances and do duties, but they also believe the Resurrection of the Dead, and Eternal Judgement, and they that do no not believe this are not new-born, not are or can be called Babes in Christ. The Faith of and in Jesus is for Eternity, and not only for this Life, for then were true Christians *of all men most miserable*, as the Apostle speaks.

I intend not any large or long Discourse about the Resurrection and Judgement to come, but only so much as serves to our present purpose, *viz.* to shew the attainment of Babes;

in relation to which I shall briefly inquire, 1. What Resurrection and Judgement is here meant. And 2. how the belief of this doth influence Babes, and what that attainment is which results from it.

1. What Resurrection, &c. is here meant. We may in the first place here understand the Resurrection of Christ from the Dead, by which we are begotten again to a lively hope, or hope o life, 1 *Pet.* 1.3. And when the Apostle reckons up the grounds of our rejoycing in Christ Jesus, as being by him freed from condemnation, he puts a *rather* upon his Resurrection, *Rom.* 8. 34. And when he writes to the *Corinthian*-Babes about the Resurrection, he begin with this as the foundation of all, that *Christ died and rose again*, 1 Cor. 15.3, 4. and thence proves the general Resurrection, *Vers.* 12, *&c.* Agreeably and in a correspendent sense to this, by the Eternal Judgement, we may understand that the Judgement concerning mens Eternal conditions is committed to Christ: that he (who is raised and is the Resurrection) will raise the dead, and Judge the dead to their Eternal states after he hath raised them; see *Acts* 10. 41, 42. and 17. 31. 2 *Tim.* 4. 1. But for fear (and indeed I do fear) that Babes may not have so distinct and exact a knowledge of this, as other Saints have, I shall pitch upon another sense and fix in it. 'Tis this,

That Babes do in the general believe that there shall be a Resurrection of all persons unto Judgement, and a Judgement of all persons to an Eternal (good or evil) state, (and therefore

therefore 'tis called an Eternal Judgement) according to *Joh.* 5. 28, 29. *The time is coming in the which all that are in the Graves ſhall hear his* (the Son of mans) *voice and ſhall come forth, they that have done good to the Reſurrection of Life, and they that have done evil unto the Reſurrection of Damnation* (ſee *Matth.* 25. 31,——46. *Rom.* 2. 6,——16. 2 *Cor.* 5,---10.) They ſhall come forth, there is the Reſurrection; to life or damnation, there is the Eternal Judgement. There are many ſpecial things about the Reſurrection, &c. which the Babes are not very capable of, and of which I ſhall ſay nothing now, but this, they do believe in the general that ſuch a thing there will infallibly be as a future Eternal ſtate of happineſs or miſery to men, according to what they have done in this life: and they that believe not this are but falſely called Chriſtians, or by the favour of a Synecdoche, which puts a part for the whole. A Saint not believing a life to come, is no leſs than a contradiction.

Object. But perhaps 'twill be objected that a man may be in Chriſt though but a Babe and as carnal, and yet not believe this doctrine of the Reſurrection, for among theſe *Corinthian*-Babes ſome it ſeems did not own it, 1 *Cor.* 15. 12.

Anſw. To this I Anſwer, That by the *ſome among you* may not be meant the *Corinthians* themſelves (for 'tis not ſaid ſome of you) but falſe teachers that came among them; who were (it may be) worſe and more infidels than *Hymenæus* and *Philetus*, who ſaid the Re-

ſurrection was paſt already, 2 *Tim.* 2. 18. For theſe ſaid there was none at all; which indeed was to deny Chriſt to be riſen, and he that doth ſo, cannot be a Chriſtian, not a Babe in Chriſt; but in this Faith that Chriſt was riſen the *Corinthians* did ſtand, 1 *Cor.* 15. 1, 4. therefore I conceive they were ſome among them, but not of them, as 1 *Joh.* 2. 19. (however the foundation of God ſtandeth ſure, 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. which is ſpoken upon a reſembling occaſion) and the Apoſtle doth not ſpeak this ſo much by way of charge as caution, of accuſation as warning, *Verſ.* 34. I ſpeak this πρὸς ἐντροπὴν to your warning, that you may fear and beware of ſuch Sadducees who have not the knowledge of God nor Scripture, *Matth.* 22. 29. and whoſe evil words and *Epicurean* language is apt to beget ill manners. So that notwithſtanding this Objection 'tis clear enough, that he cannot be a true Chriſtian, no, not of the loweſt Form, who believes not the Reſurrection of the Dead and Eternal Judgement. I ſhall therefore paſs on to ſhew how the belief of this doth influence Babes and what attainment reſults from it.

2. The Attainment of Babes from this belief, is, that they tremble at this Word of God, which is a bleſſed frame, *Iſa.* 66. 2. If the hearing of it make wicked men many times to tremble as it did *Felix*, *Acts* 24. 25. If the ſenſe of an after ſtate make men pray, as *Balaam* did, *Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my afterward* (ſo the Hebrew) *be as theirs*, Numb. 23. 10. How much better influence

fluence hath it on Babes in Christ? this trembling of theirs is of great use to the working out their Salvation, *Phil.* 2. 12. it makes them wary and cautious not to run with others to the same excess of riot, *&c.* 1 *Pet.* 4. 3,—5. it hath an influence as to dissuade from sin, so to perswade to duty; *Knowing the terrour of the Lord* (with reference to Judgement) *we perswade men*, 2 Cor. 5. 10, 11. The consideration of a future Judgement awes the most eminent Saints, as it did *Job*, *Chap.* 31. 14. and 23. and *David*, *Psal.* 119. 120. but it makes Babes especially to tremble; because they are yet without assurance of Eternal welfare: Perfect Love casteth out fear and hath boldness in the day of Judgement, 1 *Joh.* 4. 17, 18. but poor Babes are all their life long, subject to more or less bondage by the fear of death and Judgement, *Heb.* 2. 14, 15. And this though Christ have died, for want of particular application of it to themselves; which grown Saints have attained to and can therefore challenge and brave death it self, as *Paul* did, *Rom.* 8. 34,—39. 1 *Cor.* 15. 55, 57. and can desire rather than fear to die, *Phil.* 1. 23. *Heb.* 11. 35. 2 *Cor.* 4. 16,—18. But,

Babes are fearful; yet God makes use of this fear and trembling to many and great uses for their good and his glory: it lays a great restraint upon them as to sin, and (as love doth others) it constrains them to obedience. Therefore our Saviour speaks to their own Principle, *Fear him that can destroy both Body and Soul in Hell*, *Matth.* 10. 28. And saith *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* 5.

10, 11. we perſwade *men*, even poor Babes, who walk *as* men, and are got but a little beyond natural men; terrour perſwades with natural men, put them in fear that they may know they are but men, *Pſal.* 9. 20. and they ſcarce know God or acknowledge him but by the Judgements which he executes, *Verſ.* 16. Now that which is of moſt uſe to perſwade men, is of moſt uſe to perſwade Babes, who are as carnal, and walk *as* men, 1 *Cor.* 3. 1, 3. 'Tis worth our while to take notice what and how many things are back't by this Argument of judgement to come and the terrour of the Lord. I will but touch them.

1. 'Tis an Argument to provoke to Repentance, *Acts* 17. 30, 31. And this is Babes milk, which they are perſwaded to take by this Argument, that there will be a Judgement Day.

2. 'Tis an Argument for Faith and Baptiſm too, as they are conjoyned here, and *Mark* 16. 16. *He that believeth and is Baptized ſhall be ſaved, but he that believeth not ſhall be damned*: the fear of this dreadful after-clap of damnation drives many in to Faith and Baptiſm. It perſwades men to fear God and keep his commands, *Eccl* 12. 13. this perſwades men to be moderate in the uſe of worldly injoyments, which belong to the ſenſual and animal life, *Eccl.* 11. 9, 10. *Luke* 21. 34,——36. It perſwades men to embrace and improve Goſpel opportunities and the means of grace, as our Saviour hints, *Matth.* 11. 20,—— 24. It perſwades men not to cenſure, judge, deſpiſe and revile one

one another (which Babes are apt to do, 1 *Cor.* 3. 3. 1 *Pet.* 2. 1, 2.) I say it perſwades them not to do ſuch things, *Jam.* 4. 11, 12. *Rom.* 14. 10. 1 *Cor.* 4. 3,——5. 1 *Pet.* 4. 4, 5. with *Jude* 15, It perſwades to patience, *Jam.* 5. 8. It perſwades to abide in Chriſt Jeſus, and not to Apoſtatize, 1 *Joh.* 2. 28. It perſwades men to watch and be ready, *Mat.* 24. and 1 *Theſ.* 5. 1,— 7. In a word 'tis a very powerful Argument to engage to every duty and to ſerve God acceptably, 2 *Cor.* 5 9, 10. 2 *Tim.* 4. 1, 2. *Heb.* 12. 28, 29.

Thus we ſee of what huge uſe it is to believe the doctrine of the Reſurrection and Eternal Judgement, as Babes do; and do it with fear and trembling. 'Tis true indeed that love (which acts the more grown Saints) is the more generous and noble principle, yet fear is of great uſe too, for the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wiſdom, as love is the fulfilling of the Law; and under the Old Teſtament (when men were generally Babes) Religion is as much expreſt by and called fear, as under the New Teſtament 'tis by Faith and Love: which two Babes are not wholly deſtitute of, though they be acted moſt by fear. The Babes Faith is a fearful Faith, which argues its imperfection; but the grown Saints fear is full of Faith which is an Argument of its perfection: for it loves to pleaſe the God it fears, and fears to offend the God it loves. Self preſervation is natural to men, and fear hath as great influence on men to avoid what will hurt them, as love hath to do what will pre-

ſerve them. 'Tis true, fear hath torment (which perfect love caſts out) but yet it tends to the eſcaping of a greater torment, and is therefore not a little uſeful to the ſtate of Babes. This then is that which Babes attain to by believing the Reſurrection and Eternal Judgement, that they tremble at Gods Word of threatning, and *work out their Salvation with fear and trembling.* But leſt they ſhould fear and tremble more than need, I ſhall ſpeak to them a little by way of

Application.

COme poor Babes, you that tremble at the Word of God, and ſerve him though it be with fear, hear this for your Conſolation, that the high and lofty one who dwelleth in the high and holy place, doth not deſpiſe ſuch a trembling ſoul, but will dwell with it, *Iſa.* 66. 2. Jer. 3. 13. Be not afraid of the Reſurrection nor of Judgement, 'twill be an happy day for thee, read it thy ſelf what is ſaid 1 *Theſ.* 4. 13, —— 18. and 5. 1, —— 11. thou haſt a friend in the Court of Heaven, Jeſus Chriſt thine Advocate, and he 'tis that ſhall be thy Judge, who to be ſure will not condemn any that are in him, although they be but Babes. He will remember thy labour of little love, *Heb.* 6. 9, 10. as thou maiſt ſee him telling thee aforehand, *Matth.* 25. 34, — 37. where thou ſeeſt that he remembers what thou haſt forgotten, and placeth that to account, which it may be thou wert afraid was worth nothing. He is ſo gracious that thy ſins he

he will remember no more, but he is ſo righte-ous that he will not forget thy labour of love, no nor thy fear; for he hath a Book of remembrance written for them that feared the Lord and thought (mark that) that did think (and it may be could do little more than) think upon his name, *Mal.* 3. 16.

Well then as the wicked ſhould rejoyce with trembling, *Pſal.* 2. do thou tremble with rejoycing. Abide in him, keep cloſe to him whom thou haſt choſen for thy Saviour, and thou ſhalt not be aſhamed before him at his coming, 1 *Joh.* 2. 28. *Be ſtedfaſt and immoveable, yea abound alwaies in the work of the Lord, for thy labour ſhall not be in vain* (at the Reſurrection) 1 *Cor.* 15. 58. In the mean time live as one that looks for and haſtens to the coming of the Lord, 2 *Pet.* 3. 11, 12. and ſeeing he will come (without ſin) a Saviour, and change thy vile body, and make it like to his moſt glorious Body, let not only thine affections, but converſation be in Heaven, *Col.* 3. 1,——4. *Phil.* 3. 20, 21. which no man is or can be that doth not believe the Reſurrection and Eternal Judgement. Be glad therefore and bleſs God who hath given thee this Milk, and taught thee to take it in, for elſe thou hadſt been ſtill without God (ἄθεος) in the world: yea, and in the world to come; which will be a world of happineſs to thee and all Saints, who have not their portion of good in this life (as the wicked have) but 'tis reſerved for them to be theirs, at the Reſurrection and Eternal Judgement. So much

much for the attainments of Babes from this Text.

V. *Of their tasting that the Lord is gracious, and their desiring the sincere Milk of the Word to grow thereby,*

From 1 *Pet.* 2. 1,——3.

THE Apostle *Peter* had to do with Babes, as well as *Paul* (for such were the Jewish Converts generally) and having told them, *Chap.* 1. 23. that they were born again, he doth in this Text exhort them to *lay aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speaking* (to which they being yet *as* carnal, were too prone, as was noted before) *and as new-born Babes to desire the sincere Milk of the Word, that they may grow thereby, if so be* (or seeing and because) *they have tasted that the Lord is gracious.* This tasting is their coming to Christ and believing in him as the chief corner-stone, *v.* 4, 6. and their growth is their being built up on him a spiritual House, &c. *Vers.* 5. which notes both the nature and inclination of these Babes, *viz.* to come to and believe in Christ, and withal to grow up in and to be built on him; that as he is precious or an honour to them, *Vers.* 7. so they may be precious or an honour to him, and shew forth the vertues (and thereby the praises of him) who hath called them out of their darkness into his marvellous light, *Vers.* 9.

But

But of their Faith I have ſpoken before; I ſhall now ſpeak of ſome of their experience, which I conceive is coucht in this word of taſting: The perfect Chriſtian hath many ſenſes exerciſed, he is full of many and rich experiences, *Heb.* 5. 14. But the Babe hath the exerciſe of this one Senſe (Taſting) eſpecially; which begets in him a deſire and longing after the Word for growth, that he may ſuck and be ſatisfied with the breaſts of Conſolations, that he may milk out and be ſatisfied with the abundance of glory. To allude to *Iſa.* 66. 11. The Babe hath a taſte as ſoon as he is born, and hath Milk given him to eat, in which he taſtes a ſweetneſs, and from which he finds ſo much nouriſhment and ſtrength as holds his ſoul in life: *If he were not alive he could not taſte, and if he did not taſte, he could not live.* Experience is often expreſt by taſting, which is a thing beyond Hearing, and is joyn'd with Seeing, *Pſal.* 34. 8. Oh Taſte and See that the Lord is good; Now, as Seeing, ſo Taſting affects the heart, and quickens the Appetite, and therefore, ſaith he, deſire the Milk; which doth not only expreſs the duty, but the nature and inclination of Babes, and that grounded on Taſting, Seeing or becauſe they have Taſted that the Lord is gracious: ſeveral experiences (as Taſtes) they have had of this. As,

1. That the Lord will admit them to Repentance, this is of his grace: when man had ſinned the Law was inexorable, a mans Repentance could find no place there for re-acceptance though it had been ſought with tears. God might

might have chosen whether he would have admitted man to repent; but now he hath, it savours of grace: and by this the Babes Taste that he is gracious.

2. They Taste that the Lord is gracious in that he hath provided a new and living way wherein to come to him, that they may be saved at anothers cost and charges: that he sent his Son into the world to save sinners, that through him they might believe in God, and that thence they might have hope in God, 1 *Pet.* 1. 21.

3. They Taste grace in this, That God calls
Pro.28.14. for no greater things at their hand than to eat Milk, to Repent and Believe the Gospel, and doth not put them to do penance in Hell for thousands of years, or do some extraordinary tasks of duty in this world: and weeping out their eyes, wearing out their knees, *&c.*

4. They Taste his grace in that he not only commands, but invites and intreats them to come, to Repent and Believe that they may live; That God should condescend so far as to beseech and go a begging to them (as the word is) that they would be reconciled, gives them a Taste that the Lord is gracious, 2 *Cor.* 5. 19, 20.

5. They Taste it in this, That God incourageth them to come by many great and precious promises, *Isa.* 55. 1, 2, 3. *Matth.* 11. 28,—30, *&c.* Yea he swears to them as he lives that he delights not in the death of a sinner, but that he should return and live.

6. That God hath knockt so often and waited

ed so long to lead them by his goodness, patience, and long suffering to Repentance, that though they have not answered unless it were surlily and sinfully, we will not come; that though they have put his patience to it, yet that he should knock and wait, this gives them a further Taste, that the Lord is gracious.

7. That they have been at last convinced of the necessity of Repentance toward God, and Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, that they are come to themselves to see their dead, lost and undone condition, 'tis of grace; for who could have opened their eyes and wrought on their hearts, or would have done it but a gracious God? and in this they Taste his grace.

8. That they have been enabled (with the Prodigal) to prosecute this conviction, to arise and go, to repent from dead works, and to make toward God by Faith, they Taste his grace in it, for Repentance and Faith are both the gifts of a gracious God to them, *Act.* 5.31. *Ephes.* 2. 1,——8.

9. They Taste that the Lord is gracious in giving them a Spirit of Prayer and Supplication, that they can bow their knees and beg not only the pardon of their sins, but the sanctifying of their Souls. In this they Taste his grace.

10. They have a Taste of his being gracious in that they are bid welcom when they come, and that not only his Saints receive them into the brotherhood and fellowship to be free of their company, but that now and then God

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ſmiles on them too, and is pleaſed to kiſs them with the kiſſes of his mouth, and to vouchſafe them ſome fellowſhip with himſelf.

11. They Taſte that the Lord is gracious in that he ſits on a Throne of grace and gives them leave to come with boldneſs for more mercy and grace, for their ſeaſonable relief: and that he doth allow them ſincere Milk to grow thereby.

12. They Taſte his grace in this alſo, that they can diſcern the difference between their former and preſent ſtate, how deſperate and damnable that was, but how hopeful this is: that they had rather die than be dead in ſins again.

13. What preſent peace they have, and what ever hopes of more, even to everlaſting Conſolation, 'tis from the grace of God; and in it they Taſte that he is gracious, *2 Theſſ.* 2. 16.

Theſe are ſome (among others) of the experiences that Babes have, or Taſtes of the Lords being gracious; I have not ſet them out at large, becauſe I would give you them (as they have them) *viz.* for Taſtes: and though they are but ſuch, yet theſe Taſtes beget deſires and longings after the ſincere Milk that they may grow thereby. By this Taſte of theirs they can a little diſtinguiſh between ſincere and falſified Milk, between pure and impure Milk, between good and evil doctrine, though not ſo well as grown Saints: Their ear tryeth words, whether it be a form of ſound words; and their Taſte trieth milk-

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meat, whether it be wholsome and nourishing or not, to allude to that in *Job* 12. 11. and 34. 3. and therefore though they be full of appetite and desire, yet 'tis to sincere milk, for they cannot thrive nor live by any other. Now though their desires after higher attainments be (at present) their (almost) highest attainment, yet desires are not despicable things, but of value. *The desire of a man is his kindness, and a poor man is better than a Lyar*, Prov. 19. 22. though they be but poor as to attainments, yet they are rich in desires, and God takes this kindness kindly at their hands, that 'tis in their hearts to do greater things and to grow: this poor man is better than a Lyar, than an Hypocrite that pretends to, makes professions and promises of great things without a real desire and kindness to the things which he make a fair shew of in a complement and in the flesh. If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not, 2 *Cor.* 8. 12. 'Tis not a little to be able to say as *Nehemiah* did, *Chap.* 1. 11. *O Lord, I beseech thee, let now thine ear be attentive to the Prayer of thy Servant, and to the Prayer of thy Servants who desire to fear thy Name.* And as the Author of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, *Chap.* 13. 18. *Pray for us, for we trust that we have a good Conscience in all things willing to live honestly.* This Babe is a man of desires (in both senses) *i. e.* he is loving and beloved, he is desiring and desired, *Cant.* 7. 10. *Isa.* 26. 8 9. 2 *Cor.* 7. 7. Thus you have seen the Tasts and

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desires of Babes to grow: which is an attainment not to be undervalued by them, nor are they to be undervalued by others. For a close to all their former attainments and characters I shall add one more, which is much taken notice of in Scripture.

VI. *Their Love to the Brethren.*

THere is but one thing more which I shall take notice of in relation to Babes attainments, and that is, *Their Love to the Brethren*, whereby they act like members of the Body of Christ, whose office it is to have the same care one for another, 1 *Cor.* 12. 25. and not be like this world, every man for himself, or say like *Cain*, *Am I my Brothers keeper?* That they do love the Brethren (in their degree fervently as well as truly) is attested by *Peter*, who writing to Babes saith, *Seeing ye have purified your hearts in obeying the truth by the Spirit unto unfeigned Love of the Brethren, see that ye* (continue to) *Love one another, with a pure heart fervently*, 1 Pet. 1. 22. he exhorts them to do that fully, which they already did in part, according to that, 1 *Thes.* 5. 11. *Comfort your selves together, and edifie one another, as ye also do.* 'Tis the great Character of Christs Disciples that they Love one another, *Joh.* 13. 35. and by this they are known to have past from death to life, because they love the Brethren, 1 *Joh.* 3. 15. Where give me leave to note this as to this Epistle of *John*, the great duty urged

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n it is to love one another (ſpoken to and of all the children of God) and the ſin ſo much declaimed againſt is hating or not loving of one another: and when he ſaith, *Chap.* 3. 8. *He that ſinneth is of the Devil*, he meaneth this ſin in ſpecial, *For*, ſaith he, *Verſ.* 9. *whoſoever is born of God doth not commit ſin*, viz. this ſin, becauſe the ſeed of God (of whom he is born) remaineth in him (which is the ſame reaſon that is given by *Peter* preſſing to the ſame duty, 1 *Pet.* 1. 22, 23.) and *Verſ.* 10. he diſtinguiſheth the Children of God from them of the Devil by this very thing: and *Verſ.* 12. inſtanceth in *Cain* who was of the wicked one, as he proves by his breaking this command of loving his Brother. And perhaps the ſin unto death ſpoken of, *Chap.* 5. 16,——19. is meant of this ſin, for ſuch an one abideth in death, *Chap.* 3. 14. compare *Chap.* 3. 7,——16. with *Chap.* 5. 16,——19. and this ſeems to be very clear.

But to proceed as to the thing in hand, *viz.* that Babes Love the Brethren, 'tis clearly manifeſted by this among other things, that they are ready to miniſter to their neceſſities, as occaſion, opportunity and ability gives them leave to do. The Apoſtle boaſts of his *Corinthian*-Babes, that he knew the forwardneſs of their mind, and boaſted of their readineſs to this thing, 2 *Cor.* 9. 1, 2. and the Authour of the Epiſtle to the *Hebrew*-Babes, tells them, *Chap.* 6. 10. that God was not unrighteous to forget their labour of Love, which they had ſhew'd to his name, in that they had miniſtred

and did continue to minister to the Saints: and upon this score he is perswaded such good things of them as accompanied and contained Salvation, *Vers.* 9. of so great an esteem is this grace of Love, warranted and adjusted by ministring to the Saints. And indeed 'tis the great thing for which Jesus Christ saith, *Come ye blessed of my Father inherit the Kingdom prepared for you*; why Lord? for I was hungry, *&c.* and you ministred to me in doing it to mine, *Matth.* 25. 34,---40. This labour of Love is not in vain in the Lord.

I might inlarge on this Theam, but it shall suffice to have toucht it. And now that Babes may behold themselves in this Glass, I shall summ up their attainments and characters briefly thus: They have the Foundation laid; they are new-born and do eat Milk in obeying the Principles of the Doctrine of Christ: they have all things necessary to the being of a Saint, and such as accompany or contain Salvation; though not enough to a well-being here, or to have an entrance ministred to them abundantly in Heaven, as other Saints have: they have all constituting and essential Graces, as Repentance, Faith, Love, though not in so perfect a degree as the other Classes have, they press forward (after their manner, in desires) to grow; though they cannot run the race, yet they walk in the way of Gods Commandments; they press after to follow the other Saints though slowly (as the Poet said of *Ascanius*, ——*sequitur non passibus æquis*) and are not able to keep pace with them. This is their

their picture, the draught of their attainment; the particular features and lineaments whereof are described before in their respective places, to which I refer you. I must now proceed to shew them their defectiveness in comparison of other Saints, and wherein they are *as* carnal, that I may provoke them to jealousie and emulation, and thereby to perfection.

III. *Of the Babes defectiveness in comparison of other Saints, and wherein they are* as *carnal, and walk as men.*

1. *Of their defectiveness, and wherein they fall short in comparison of the higher Classes of Saints.*

THat they fall short of Fathers and Young men, who are strong Saints, 'tis needless to take up much time or many words to declare, because 'tis so obviously known and easily granted by all; but that they fall short of the little Children is that which I am to evince. The character of little Children is that they know the Father, *viz.* to be their Father, 1 *Joh.* 2. 13. But the Babe-child, the Infant of (attainment as well as) daies, the sucking Child that is fed only with Milk, though he have a Father, and a Father that provides for him, yet he knows him not to be his Father. The generality of the Old Testament professors were but Babes, and their usual way of address

to God was, as the God that made Heaven and Earth, *the Creator*; and sometimes as the God of *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*, *the Promiser*: But seldom, not above twice (as a collective body) addrest to God as their Father; the places where they did so address are *Isa.*63.16. and 64. 8. both which are rather Prophecies of what they should do hereafter, than assertions of what they did do, as some conceive. And in this latter they address to him as a Father, *viz.* a maker and Soveraign, as appears by calling themselves the clay, and God the Potter, and telling him that they were the works of his hand. And to prevent an Objection that may be made from the Prodigal, who did at first address to God, as his Father (I will go to *my* Father, and in *my* Fathers house) it might be in this sense of a Creator, as in *Deut.* 32. 6. beside, I may say that he seems to be the representative of a returning back-slider, rather than of a Convert at the very first: and though returning also is a Conversion, and works much like what it doth at the very first, yet it hath respect to a former relation, which was not wholly cut off, as was the case of returning *Israel*, in *Hos.* 1. 7. *Jer.* 3. 1,——5. where they speak of him *as theirs*, though they had been called by him *Loammi* not my people, and almost divorced by him, which they deserved to be.

Luk.22.32.

So for a while at the beginning of the Gospel, the Disciples were but as Babes, for they knew not the Father, *Joh.* 14. 6,——11. And though Christ had taught them to pray Our Father,

ther, yet 'twas long ere they had learned to ask of the Father in the name of Christ, *Joh.* 16. 23, 24. or to know their union with the Father and the Son: and therefore our Saviour tells them so often that they should know and enjoy more *at that day:* what day? *viz.* when he was ascended to the Father, for then 'twas *my Father and your Father, my God and your God*, Joh. 20. 17. And the Spirit descended from the Father, the Holy Ghost not being given till Christ was glorified, *Joh.* 7. 39. saith Christ, *At that day, ye shall know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you* (which yet you know not, though it be so) *Joh.* 14. 20. *In that day ye shall ask me nothing; Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you*, Chap. 16. 23. and *Vers.* 25. *The time cometh* (viz. *that day*) *when I shall no more speak to you in Parables, but shew you plainly of the Father.* And again, *Vers.* 26. *In that day ye shall ask in my name.* And accordingly after Christs Ascension, and the receiving of the Holy Ghost, they did usually cry, *Abba Father*, Rom. 8. 15, 16. Gal. 4. 6. they addrest to God, as *the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and God our Father*; as may be seen in places more than too many to be quoted here: they had more knowledge (even assurance) of their interest in the Father and the Son, of communion and fellowship with the Father and the Son, 1 *Joh.* 1. 3 which for a great while they were unacquainted with. This then is the conclusion which I draw from these Premises,

That,

1. The Babe-Saints though they have interest in and communion with God and Christ, yet (while such) 'tis much in the dark to to them, and they have not the assurance of it, as the little Children and other higher degrees of Saints have: I may say of these, as God did of *Israel* in their infant age, *Hos.* 11. 1, 3. *When Israel was a Child* (a Babe) *I loved him, I taught Ephraim also to go, but they knew not that I healed them:* The Babes are rather said to be known of God, than they can be said to know him, as 'tis expresst concerning them, *Gal.* 4. 9. Babes have life, and light, and power in a measure; there are influences from God to them, and a secret converse between God and them, which yet they apprehend and discern but a little. It may be said of them as *Jacob* said, *Surely the Lord is in this place and I knew it not*, Gen. 26. 16. God descends into them by many illapses, they ascend to God by many breathings, yet they are not sure, they know not whether this be God that come down, or grace that goes up. The best see but darkly and through a glass, but in part in comparison of what vision is to be; but these see more darkly than the others that see but darkly, and know less than they that know but in part: being Babes they understand as Babes, for so that is which we render Child, 1 *Cor.* 13. 11. Now though there be more than a *Potentia*, some Acts, yet they have so little understanding, that 'tis insignificant in comparison of men, 1 *Cor.* 14. 20. They see as the poor man did at first in a confused way, men as Trees, yet walking,

walking, *Mark* 8. 24. when other Saints see them as they are, men clearly; as that man did after the second touch of Christs hand, *Vers.* 25. These poor Babes act grace, but can hardly say 'tis grace: they walk and follow, as *Peter* did the Angel out of Prison, but wist not that it was true, which was done unto him, *Acts* 12. 9. They hear God and answer to his call as little *Samuel* did, but as yet he knew not the Lord, 1 *Sam.* 3. 7. They have attained to more things, than they have attained to the knowledge of, which is the advance of other Saints. Their eyes are held in great measure as the Disciples were, that though Jesus draw near and talk with them, yet they know him not, *Luke* 24. 15, 16. he tells them this and the other thing, and they feel its working, but know not what to make of it, and are afraid to ask him, *Luke* 9. 45. Many saw and talkt with Jesus, yet took him for the Gardiner, and knew him not till a while after, *Joh.* 20. 14,--17. So 'tis with these poor souls, though God know them, and work in them, and talk to them, yet what he is doing, they know not yet, as Christ said to *Peter*, *Joh.* 13. 7. if they be in the Mount and see any glory, they are more afraid than transported, and say, *It is good to be here*, and yet know not what they say, *Luk.* 9. 33. While Christ talks to them their hearts burn within them, some heat and warmings they feel, but they know him not, *Luk.* 24. 16,--32. they are troubled, and thoughts arise in their hearts, though he say, *Peace be to you*, *Vers.* 36, 37. And then again, they believe not for joy, *Vers.* 41.

that which would promote anothers, seems to obstruct and put a stop to their Faith. This is their first defect in comparison of others, and wherein they fall short, that though they are (and act like) Gods people (in a measure) yet they know it not, nor can yet discern clearly the work of grace, nor can say, *I am my beloveds, and he is mine.*

2. They are defective in this, far short of other Saints, that they are unskilful in the Word of righteousness, because they are Babes, *Heb.* 5. 13. the Word of righteousness is the Gospel, or Christ Jesus who is the whole of the Gospel; for to Preach the Gospel, and to Preach Christ is all one, so a Minister of Christ and the Gospel, or the Word, is all one. Christ Jesus is called the Word, *Joh.* 1. 1. the Word of Salvation, *Acts* 13. 26. with *Acts* 3. 26. the Word of Gods grace, *Acts* 20. 32. the Word of Life, *Phil.* 2. 16. and here the Word of righteousness, in which these Babes were unskilful, ἄπειροι. Which is not negative, excluding all knowledge; but privative, excluding full knowledge and skill. Now as to this they were inexpert or unskilful to discern and know Christ (as they should) to be the root of righteousness, for justification and sanctification, to be made of God to us righteousness, both by imputation and operation.

Hesych. ἄπειροι, ἄγναστοι.

1. They were unskilful in the Word of righteousness for justification. These Jewish or *Hebrew*-Babes could not easily, *Exuere hominem Judaicum*, put off the legal man, who sought righteousness by, or at least as it were by

by the works of the Law, *Rom.* 9. 32. and 10. 2, ——4. Saith *Vatablus* of this Babe, *Non potest intelligere sermonem Evangelicum, qui docet veram justitiam :* he cannot understand the Word of the Gospel which teacheth the true righteousness, and that is Justification by Faith and not by the works of the Law. This Babe knows the Elements (στοιχεῖα) the letters of the Gospel, but is not yet able to spell and read the whole Word of righteousness. Though Jesus Christ were made of God to the *Corinthian*-Babes righteousness, as 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. yet they were ignorant how, *viz.* that he became sin and a curse for us, *that we might be the righteousness of God in him,* as the Apostle tells them and us, 2 *Cor.* 5. 21. and therefore he resolved to know (or make known) nothing among them, but Christ and him crucified, 1 *Cor.* 2. 2. that is, as dying for our sins (for he had none, knew none of his own) and as he rose again for our Justification, *Rom.* 4. 25. which was the thing he Preacht to the *Corinthians* at first, but doubted a little, whether they firmly believed it, 1 *Cor.* 15. 1, ——5. and therefore were but Babes as well as for other things, which he mentions, 1 *Cor.* 3.

And that this is the Apostles meaning, as to the *Hebrew*-Babes, is clear from the context and the scope of the whole Epistle, which is to shew the excellency of Christ the High-Priest after the order of *Melchisidec* (the Lord our righteousness) beyond that of the Law which made none perfect nor righteous. He begins, *Vers.* 10, 11. with this High-Priest after the order

order of *Melchisedec*, which is the Word of righteousness and strong meat, and the summ of all which he had to say, as he speaks in *Chap* 8, 1. where he reassumes the discourse and goes on with it, telling them that this is more excellent and better, which word (*better*) he useth of Christ and the Gospel dispensation at least thirteen times. This their weak stomachs could not concoct, and therefore he calls them Babes: to this purpose *Jac. Capellus* speaks clearly and fully, *Qui typorum ceremonialium ita particeps est, ut in indigere se putet, ac eos ut cibum suum amplectatur, is sermonem justitiæ, fœdus Evangelicum, in quo vera justitiæ doctrina traditur, capere non potest; repuerascit enim, adeoque jam redit ad infantiam, eamque priore deteriorem.* In short, he that thinks he needs the ceremonial types and makes them his meat, cannot take in the *Word of righteousness*, the Evangelical Covenant, for he is a worse Babe than they were of old. The *Galatians* also were guilty of this babishness and were not past the Spoon; they were receding and going back again to the Law, or at least blending and mixing it with Faith for righteousness; for which *Paul* calls them foolish, the same with Babes and unskilful, as appears by the whole Epistle, and the scope and design thereof takes up hereabout: yea he travels again for them, to bring them out from the Law to a more perfect knowledge and Image of Christ, *Chap.* 4. 19. So then, this is the Babes defect that he is unskilful in the Word of righteousness, that and how Christ is our righteousness. The Christi-

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an Jews were many of them but Jewiſh Chriſtians, they were not eaſily brought to lay Moſes and his Law aſide; and the Chriſtian Gentiles were too much but Gentile-Chriſtians, they could hardly part with their old acquaintance, the Law of Nature and works. Few were come to *Paul's* pitch to reſt only in Chriſt Jeſus, to reckon all Ceremonies, Priviledges, Tears, Prayers, Humiliations and all that may be called our own righteouſneſs to be loſs and dung as to Juſtification, yea though as touching the Law, blameleſs; and to be found in him and the righteouſneſs that is of God by Faith in him, that they may have no confidence in the fleſh (which is but graſs) and rejoyce in Chriſt Jeſus only. And therefore 'tis obſervable that the Apoſtles whether they writ to Jews or Gentiles made it ſtill their buſineſs to bring them off from every Law and Covenant, to that of Faith; and there to ground and build them upon the only true foundation and corner-ſtone Chriſt Jeſus, that he (as he deſerves) might in all things have the prehemineence, and be all in all, *Col.* 3. 10, 11. *Gal.* 6. 15, 16. *Heb.* 13. 7, 8. 1 *Pet.* 2. 5, 6. 1 *Cor.* 1. 29, ——31. Gal. 6. 14. Phil. 3.

2. Babes are alſo unſkilful in the Word of righteouſneſs for ſanctification, to know him experimentally as the root of ſanctification, and that they are not only to bring forth fruit, but to bring it forth by and in him. We have not only our firſt but future grace from Chriſt, and our fruits of righteouſneſs which are by Chriſt, are alſo (even then when we are filled with

with them) acceptable to God; and to the glory and praise of God by him, in whom all our fresh springs are, in whom is our fruit found, from whose fulness we receive grace for grace, and without being and abiding in him we can do nothing, *Phil.* 1. 11. 1 *Pet.* 2. 5. *Hos.* 14. 8. *Psal.* 87. 7. *Joh.* 1. 16. and 15. 5. They that will grow in grace, must grow in the knowledge of Christ, as the root of that growth, 2 *Pet.* 3. 18. that as they have received him they may walk in him, rooted and built up in him, *Col.* 2. 6, 7. that he may be not only the foundation, but the whole structure and the adorning may be from him. As it is essential to Gospel sanctification to do all for God, as our end; so 'tis to do all from and in the strength of Christ, through which alone we are able to do all things, *Phil.* 4. 13. as the glory of God is the final, so Christ is the efficient cause of all the fruits of righteousness, *Phil.* 1. 11.

Indeed, 'tis as hard a thing to live out of our selves and fetch all from another, to say as *Paul*, *It is not I that live, but Christ liveth in me*, as 'tis not to live to our selves but to another. Babes act and speak as if they lived on their own stock, and boast too often as if they had not received, as the *Corinthians* did, 1 *Cor.* 4. 7. This principle of deriving all sanctification from Christ is not presently and distinctly known to all believers; 'tis probable that the Disciples understood it not, till Christ taught it them in that Sermon, *John* 15. and this indeed is the case of Babes, for though to them

them Christ be made wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, yet they are unskilful and inexpert as to the derivation of it, and to have particular recourse to him for it. Again,

3. Babes are defective in this, that though they love to hear much, yet they are unable to bear much, especially any thing that is beyond Milk, and called meat, yea strong meat: and therefore 'twere to hurt and not to help them, to feed them with Bread and Wine, such as *Melchisedec* presented to *Abraham*, *Gen.* 14. 18. Our Saviour had many things to say, his heart was full, but he could not give it vent then, for his Disciples were not able to bear it, *Joh.* 16. 12. And *Paul* tells his *Corinthian*-Babes, that he had fed them with Milk and not with strong meat, for hitherto ye were not able to bear it nor yet are ye able, 1 *Cor.* 3. 2. so the *Hebrew*-Babes were dull, thick and hard of hearing the Doctrine which he calls strong meat, they could digest Milk only, *Chap.* 5. 11, &c. Strong meat makes Babes sick of hearing. 'Tis like *Saul*'s Armour to *David*, too heavy for him, he hath not been used to it, nor tryed it, and therefore cannot bear it, he must to his Sling or can do no feats. They are not yet so strong to put on all the Armour of God, they cannot weild the Sword of the Spirit, nor use the Shield of Faith dextrously. They are not yet wean'd from the Milk, and who can teach them knowledge? *i. e.* high and great knowledge of wisdom, *&c.* they must have line on line, now and then a little, *Isa.* 28. 9, —— 11.

Hesych. νωθὲς, ἄλογος, βραδὺς, ἀσθενής.

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they must have the same things over and over; as little ones when they go to School, are a great while a learning their Alphabet, and must be shewn again and again, which is A, and which is B, *&c.* a man must lisp and stammer and tone it to them in their way. Many a young Student takes a great deal of pains, is ever reading, but is not Master of what he reads; and the fault is not so much in the memory, or the Will, as in the understanding: so 'tis with these Babes, they hear and read much, but cannot digest and concoct it; no, though they remember it: but strong men love to make their meals of strong meat, *Heb.* 5.14. Again,

4. Babes are defective in this that they have not attained to use or an habit as they of full age (or the perfect) have: as much difference as there is between habit and disposition, so much there is between Babes and grown Saints, for so the distinction is, *Heb.* 5.14. Habits are full of skill and strength and make operation easie, whereas dispositions are faint and weak, meer essays and attempts, such as are in Babes to speak and go. They have not (like *David* as to his Armour) been used nor habited to such things, and cannot go nor walk in them as others can that have try'd again and again: we easily do things we have been used or wont to do, but we are bunglers at things for want of use and habit, which is the case of Babes; so that the difference between these and grown Saints, is as much as between manhood and infancy, the strength and weakness of the one and other, as between an habit

habit of perfection and an imperfect disposition and inclination.

5. Babes are defective in this, that they have not the senses exercised (the taste they have (as before) but not all the senses exercised) to discern both good and evil *Heb.* 5. 14. that which strong men have, Babes want, *viz.* discerning faculties, and an ability to distinguish things that differ, that they may approve of the things which are most excellent, as *Paul* prayed that the *Philippians* might be able to do (*Chap.* 1. 10. compared with the Margent) and not only hold fast that which is good. For want of this skill of discerning.

6. The Babes are apt to be tossed to and fro with every (fair) wind of Doctrine, and to be abused by crafty mates and false teachers, that can make and fit as well as feign words on purpose: this is hinted in *Ephes.* 4. 14. *That we henceforth be no more Children* (gr. Babes) *tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the slight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.* And of all them to whom Epistles were written, the people that are called Babes were in most danger; as the *Corinthians*, 1 *Cor.* 4. 15,——21. which is the occasion of his putting them upon watching, standing fast in the Faith, to quit themselves like men and to be strong, 1 *Cor.* 16. 13. And again tells them his fears of them lest as the Serpent beguiled *Eve* (in her infancy) through his subtlety, so their minds should be corrupted (by false teachers) from the simplicity that is in Christ, 2 *Cor.* 11. 1,--5.

and

and again, *Verſ.* 12,——15. ſo the *Hebrews* (the Babe Chriſtian Jews in *Judea*) were in great danger of being turned aſide by falſe teachers, which occaſioned that Epiſtle to them: and the Jews diſperſed alſo were in the like danger, as appears by 2 *Pet.* 2. 1,——3. and 3. 17, and the *Galatians* alſo, as is evident from *Chap.* 1. 6,——9. and the ſcope of the whole Epiſtle, but the little Children are more fixed and firm, 1 *Joh.* 2. 18,——27.

7. The Babes defectiveneſs is ſeen in this, that they ſerve God rather after the manner of Servants, than as Children: they are (as the Prodigal did at firſt wiſh to be) as hired Servants. This is clear from *Gal.* 4. the Heir, *Verſ.* 1. as long as he is a Child (*gr.* a Babe) differeth nothing from a Servant, but is, *Verſ.* 2. under Tutors and Governours (a Schoolmaſter, the Law, *Chap.* 3. 24.) and while they are Children (*gr.* Babes) are in bondage under the Elements, or rudiments of the world, *Verſ.* 3. which he calls beggarly, *Verſ.* 7. and tells them 'tis (though they deſire it) to be in bondage, *Verſ.* 7. and oppoſeth the Son and Servant, *Verſ.* 6. But now, the grown Saints ſtand faſt in the liberty, wherewith Chriſt had made them free, as *Paul* exhorts, *Gal.* 5. 1. and will not be again intangled with this yoke of bondage; but worſhip God in Spirit and in Truth. Thus have I ſhewn wherein Babes are defective in compariſon of other Saints; and now I muſt ſhew worſe things than theſe, *viz.* their carnality, wherein they are *as* carnal.

II. *Of*

II. *Of their being* as *Carnal and walking* as *men.*

THese poor Babes are but a degree above Carnal men; though they be not carnal, yet *as* carnal: Many of them are so, for (as I have once and again hinted) there are degrees among them, and they are not acted nor do act all alike: some of the Babes are less defective and less carnal than others. Of the *Corinthians* the Apostle speaks, not only that they were Babes and not spiritual, but that they were *as* carnal, and walkt *as* men; there was but little difference (in many things) between them and meer carnal men, men in and walking in and after the flesh, 1 *Cor.* 3. 1,—3. This will appear in (alas!) but too many particulars and instances. As,

1. They were *as* carnal in this, that there was among them, envy, strife, and division or faction, *Vers.* 3. and because of this which was undeniable, the Apostle appeals to them and makes them Judges, whether they were not carnal and walked as men, *viz.* in the flesh, or according to men and not according to God, as *Grotius* expresseth it: Are ye not carnal? ye cannot deny it, 'tis undeniable. You cannot deny that ye are envious, *&c.* it witnesseth (and is not only witnessed by others) to your faces, and therefore you cannot deny but you are carnal; for such things are the

works of the flesh, *Gal.* 5. 19,——21. and it comes from below, not only from earth and men, but from Hell and the Devil (who worketh these things in the children of disobedience, and in you who are herein disobedient children) if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth, for this wisdom descendeth not from above, but is sensual, earthly and devilish, *Jam.* 3. 14, 15. 'Tis such as a spiritually and heavenly wise man would be ashamed of. Whoever then be found such as these *Corinthians* are, but Babes and as carnal, how high soever they may carry it, and how great soever their name may be: the same thing that denominates them Babes, will denominate any or all others so, where ever 'tis found. Only this is to be noted, that this is not ascribed to them from any particular act (for who liveth and sinneth not, in many things we offend all) but 'tis from a kind of habitual frequency and continuance, for so the word *walking* doth import. A Christian should excel the best of men in all morality and Ingenuity, but to be like the worst of men (envious ones, the Devils pictures) is very carnal indeed. But let us inquire a little into the occasion and rise of this.

The occasion not given but taken was from *Paul* and *Apollo*, who planted and watered them; from hence they grew into more than emulations, for they were envious for their sakes (as *Joshuah* was for *Moses*) and puffed up for one against another, *Chap.* 4. 6. one was for *Paul*, and

and another for *Apollo*, as being of them, and this was their carnality, *Verſ.* 4. but wherein lay this carnality? were they more carnal in ſaying, I am one of *Pauls* Children, or one of *Pauls* Hearers, than *Paul* in calling himſelf their Father and Teacher? ſurely no, the carnality lay not in this. *Paul* calls *Timothy* and *Titus* his Sons, and ſaith of theſe *Corinthians*, Chap. 4. 14, 15. that they were his Sons, that he had begotten them, that they were of him; and therefore in that relative, reſpective and reſembling ſenſe they might without carnality call him Father, and ſay they were of him. But the carnality lay in ſuch things as theſe following.

1. They were more taken with the gifts and parts of either of theſe than with their office and graces: men have (as I may ſay) ſeveral humours, and they are moſt taken with that man, that takes and toucheth their humour moſt: Some that were for down-right plainneſs took *Paul*'s part; others that were of a more nice and tickliſh humour were taken with *Apollo*'s Eloquence: for *Paul* came not with Oratory, *Chap.* 2. 1, ——4. but with plainneſs of ſpeech, 2 *Cor.* 3. 12. And *Apollo* was an Eloquent man, *Acts* 18. 24. In this they were Babes and as carnal; for whereas they ſhould have no mans perſon or parts in admiration, but honour the man of God for the works ſake, they ſeemed to honour each for their words ſake, and not for Gods Word ſake, which came unto them. And alas! how many ſuch Babes are there among us alſo? Some are

all for a bold Preacher (that comes with down-right blows) for a plain man without welt or guard as we say: and others are more fine and curious, they must have the Dish garnished, the Cloath laced and trim'd *Al-a-mode*, they care not for plain Song: this is all Babish and carnal to look after what suits our humour, and not after edification and increase.

Ezek. 33. 30,--32. 2 Tim. 4. 3, 4.

2. These Babes, and as carnal *Corinthians* did it seems much confine, not only themselves but God too, to such a mans Ministry: they lookt for no increase (some of them) unless *Paul* did Preach, nor others unless *Apollo* did Preach; as if their Faith and the blessing had come from the man, as is intimated in *Chap. 3. vers. 5, 6, 7.* with *Chap. 1. 13, 14.* if *Paul* Baptized, Preacht and administred the Lords Feast or Supper, then they promised themselves great matters, as others did from *Apollo*; as if the success had been from men and not from God. Poor Babes! that will let none feed them but such a Nurse, or such a Servant, as if the Milk would do them most good when this or that person puts it into their mouth. How many of these are there to this day, that care not to hear unless such a man Preach; tush, say they, this is not the man I came to hear, and away they go. My heart will never be beaten down and broken, saith one, unless *Paul* Preach; nor mine quickened and raised up, saith another, unless *Apollo* Preach. They are more taken with man than God, and mans word than Gods too too often: when we must know that

if

if any work be wrought 'tis the Lords doing, and he alone ſhould be wonderful in our eyes: who ever brings a mercy 'tis God ſends and bleſſeth it, and the glory ſhould be his. Theſe Babes receive a man, that they affect, as an Angel of God, yea as Chriſt Jeſus, and bleſs him too, *Gal.* 4. 14, 15. and it may be after awhile another ſteals away their hearts (for they are giddy, and unſtable many of them) and then *Apollo* is beyond *Paul*, and he becomes their enemy for telling them the truth, *Verſ.* 16. and they exclude him for another, *Verſ.* 17. Thus as if the men were all in all, as they affect, do they celebrate and admire; as if not Chriſt but *Paul*, *&c.* had been crucified for them, or were divided, the Apoſtle upbraids them, 1 *Cor.* 1. 12, 13.

3. Theſe Babes were yet ſo carnal that ſome truth would ſcarce be believed by them unleſs it came out of *Paul*'s mouth, nor by others unleſs it came from *Apollo*'s: they embraced the truth for the mans ſake, more than the man for the truths ſake; and the feet were more beautiful than the tydings, or elſe the tydings were not beautiful, if ſuch a mans feet did not bring them. If *Paul* ſaid it was an Oracle, his (*ipſe dixit*) word was ſufficient to ſome, who would ſcarce believe it from *Apollo*; and others that were for *Apollo* preferred it much beyond what they would have done if *Paul* had ſaid it: 'tis to them as if 'twere another thing, another Goſpel, another Chriſt, another Spirit, 2 *Cor.* 11. 4. And as it was then is it not now? ſome truths will not down with ſome perſons

unleſs it come from ſuch a man, as if he made it more and another leſs true than it was; whereas the truth is the ſame whether in *Paul* or *Apollo*'s mouth; and not at all the more or leſs true for this or that mans ſaying it. If ſuch a man or party of men ſay ſo, we will believe it, ſay many Babes. This or that man is their Oracle, if he ſay it, it muſt be true; if he do not ſay it, eſpecially if he gainſay it, it cannot be true.

4. They were yet ſo carnal that they fell into parties, and took ſides, and thence came envying and ſtrife, faction and confuſion; they brake out into vilifying of one another, they grew proud and quarrelſome, and could ſcarce live in love and peace together. We ſay *Paul* is the beſt Preacher, he Preacheth ſtrongly, ſay the Paulinists; and ſay the Apollonians, *Apollo* is the beſt Preacher, he Preacheth fluently: and they can ſcarce forbear fighting, and crying out, Who is on our ſide? who? and wo and alas, is not this fulfilled in our ears in our daies! Who would think that Babes ſhould make ſo much a do? but the queſtion reſolves it ſelf, the Babes are carnal; and whence comes fighting and war but from the luſts of the fleſh? *Jam.* 4. 1. Oh that I might by entreaty prevail that theſe Babiſh and carnal tricks may be laid aſide: it ſhall be granted to you that God may uſe one man more than another for bringing in and building up; but ſtill remember that the excellency of the power is of God and not of the Earthen Veſſel. It ſhall be granted that thou maiſt love, if thou wilt

wilt not Idolize thy Father *Paul*, nor call him Father as the Jews did the Pharisees. It may be *Boanerges* may suit one and *Barnabas* another better; but remember, it must not be judged by humour. Hear thine *Apollo*, but receive the Word not as his but as Gods, or else 'twill not work effectually, 1 *Thes.* 2. 13. do not call him thy (*magnus Apollo*) thine Oracle. Believe the truth who ever Preach it, *Paul* or *Apollo*, but do not pin thy Faith on any mans sleeve, be it white or black: be of what Church thou wilt, so thou be of the Church of Christ, and do not glory in this, I am of *Paul*, and I of *Apollo*; for there is no Church in Scripture called this mans or that mans, 'tis the Church of God, and the Churches of Christ. I could say other things, but I intend to spare you all I can, though there are many more carnalities yet to be mentioned; *pudetque referre*, &c.

2. They were *as* carnal in that they were proud of being in Church communion, though they had and kept communion with very unclean persons (and their lump was leavened) That they did so is clear from 1 *Cor.* 5. and yet were puffed up, *Vers.* 2. and gloried, *Vers.* 6. they boasted of being in fellowship, though it were with gross and unheard of sinners, *Vers.* 1. which puts the Apostle upon such Exhortations as we find in *Vers.* 11. and 2 *Cor.* 6. 14,——— When persons can content themselves with and be proud of such common, prophane (and therefore fulsome and offensive) communion at large, 'tis an argument of their being *as* car-

nal: when content with Ordinances disorderly administred, they are as carnal, 1 *Cor.* 11. 17,——34. when humane partitions steal the name of a Church, and mixt participations the name of communion, and Christians can please themselves with and glory in it, they are *as* carnal. Be not therefore unequally yoked; and if any that is called Brother be a Fornicator, *&c.* with such an one don't you eat.

3. That these *Corinthian*-Babes were *as* carnal appears by their going to Law with one another before the unbelievers and unjust, 1 *Cor.* 6. 1,——8. this they were bold and daring in, *durst any of you?* Vers. 1. this they did for toyes and trifles, the *smallest* matters, *Vers.* 2. they had cause to be ashamed of it, *Vers.* 5. as if there had not been one wise or honest man among them; 'twas utterly and undeniably a fault, *Vers.* 7. And yet being but Babes and *as* carnal, this they durst to do. Such Babes are all they who do after this fashion: so is every one, such another piece of carnality, who refuseth the hearing of the Saints, and goes to Law with his Brother before unbelievers and the unjust. The Apostle speaks angerly in this case, *What? dare you? know ye not*, &c. Can you profess and pray? and yet not forgive, nor suffer, but wrong and defraud, and that your Brethren! Oh what a strange thing is this, it cannot be excused nor any plea can be made for it, 'tis utterly a fault ('tis altogether and wholly a fault, as the *gr.*) 'tis base all over!

4. Babes

4. Babes appear to be as carnal in this, that they pass from one extream to another in their actings, and are not acquainted with the golden mean and moderation: they either under or over do. A while these *Corinthians* were so careless that they did not mind to cast out or censure the incestuous person, 1 *Cor.* 5. and anon they are so violent, that they will not forgive him, but suffer him to be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow, 2 *Cor.* 2. Thus they go from the extream of defect, to that of excess, and are not acquainted with the divine mediocrity to walk in the midst of the paths of judgement. So the *Galatian* Babes, at the first they admire *Paul*, and bless him, but after a while, they carry it to him as if he had been their enemy, *Gal.* 4. 14,——16. and this was soon done, *Chap.* 1. 6. At the beginning, who but *Paul*, they were ready to Deify him; after a while, he was no body, they were ready to defie him: thus do they, not veeze about by degrees, but chop about from one extream to another, being tossed with every wind of doctrine, *Ephes.* 4. 14. they sail with that wind that blows, and are carried with the last man they heard, poor weather-cocks that they are.

When our Saviour began to wash the Disciples feet, *John* 13. saies *Peter*, Vers. 6. *Lord, dost thou wash my feet?* he seems to put it off with scorn; what have I no more manners, than to let thee wash my feet? thou shalt never wash my feet, *Vers.* 8. and yet when Christ had told him but a word or two, saies he,

Vers. 9.

Verſ. 9. Lord, not only my feet, but my hands and my head. The one extream was, thou ſhalt not, never waſh my feet; and the other extream is, waſh my head: he paſſeth from one extream to another in a moment as 'twere. In matter of practice the *Corinthians* were in the extream; one while not caſt out, another not take in the inceſtuous perſon: in point of affection, the *Galatians* would now pull out their eyes for *Paul*, and then pull out his eyes: and as for proteſtation, *Peter* is one time for not at all, and by and by for all over: this is the way of theſe Babes, and this their way is their folly, for they are *as* carnal.

5. They are *as* carnal in this, that they take great exceptions at a little matter, they will take pet at nothing almoſt. If you be not of their way and follow them, they will take it ill even to the forbidding of doing Chriſt's work, as the Diſciples did, *Mark 9. 38.* but they were *as* carnal in this, and therefore Chriſt forbids them to do any ſuch thing, and on weighty reaſons too, *Verſ. 39, 40.* Babes in Chriſt are many of them of a touchy, peeviſh and ſowr humour. So when the Diſciples met with colder entertainment than they lookt for, they were for fire from Heaven, which was an evident ſign that they knew not what ſpirit they were of, *Luke 9. 51,——55.* When the Apoſtle *Paul* had made a promiſe to the *Corinthians* of coming to them, *1 Cor. 16. 5,——7.* and was diſappointed, they preſently accuſe him of lightneſs and complement, which puts him upon Apologiſing for himſelf, *2 Cor. 1. 15,——24.*

and

and surely they are as babish as these were, that are so rash and censorious, that take pet and make exception without cause; they are as carnal.

6. Babes are *as* carnal in making many questions, either trivial or needless ones; they concern themselves much about things of little concernment to their edification. Under the notion of a case or scruple of Conscience they will ask many an impertinent question. The way of asking questions may be of great use, *Qui dubitat, qui sæpe rogat*, &c. but carnal men as the Pharisees and Sadducees were, askt Christ many a captious and quarrelsome question; yea the Devil abused our common Mother by a Quærie: and in this the Babes are *as* carnal that they take up a great deal of time and discourse about impertinent and little things. The *Corinthians* troubled *Paul* about such things as common discretion would have determined, and therefore he tells them so often in relation to it, thus say I, not the Lord, (1 *Cor.* 7. 6. and 12. and 25, 26. and 40.) as much as to say, these things are not so much matter of Religion and Conscience, as of prudence and discretion. As about Marrying, so about eating they seemed to be very solicitous and much concerned, 1 *Cor.* 8. which yet was an indifferent thing, *Vers.* 8. only such liberty must not be abused to the offence of others, *Vers.* 9. else 'tis not a matter of Conscience whether I may eat or not, this or that, for any thing that is sold in the Shambles and good for food is lawful to be eaten without a dispute, 1 *Cor.* 9.

27, —— 33.

27.——33. so the Disciples till Christs Ascension were full of pitiful questions, who shall be greatest? *Matth.* 18. 1. what shall this man do? *Joh.* 21. 21. *Wilt thou at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?* Acts 1. 6. Alas! what a poor low way of questioning is this? indeed to ask, *What shall I do to be saved?* what is the Will of God concerning me in my place and relation? how shall I attain to a more perfect state? such things are considerable and worth the asking: but to be taken up about little and low things, is to be as Babes, and as carnal; *more nice than wise.*

7. These Babes live much more by Tradition and the example of men, than by rule or reason. They are as to their Faith a kind of implicite believers, and believe as the Church, or such and such a great wise and learned Doctor believes: and their practice is a kind of imitation of some men in such and such things. This made *Paul* speak to his *Corinthians* to follow him but as he followed Christ, if you will follow and have an example of me, look on me only as in, and walking in the steps of Christ Jesus, 1 *Cor.* 11. 1,——3. I fear that to this day many persons take into such a track, because such and such men (whom they affect) do so, more than for any conviction that is upon them, or any account they can give that it is the way of God. But remember, *Non quâ itur, sed quâ eundum est*, we should not walk by what is done, but by what ought to be done, *Matth.* 19. 1,—— 9.

8. They are *as* carnal in having more zeal than

than knowledge to manage it: of the Jews the Apostle speaks thus, *Rom.* 10. 2, 3. and in like manner doth he speak of the *Galatian*-Babes, and upon the like occasion, *Gal.* 4. 16, —— 21. and *Chap.* 3. 1, —— 5. They no sooner get a notion by the end, but they are all of a flame; they (like tinder) take fire presently, and suffer zeal (though without discretion) to eat them up. *Paul* himself, while carnal, was a most zealous man, but 'twas in the daies of his ignorance. Zeal (like fire) is a good Servent indeed, but 'tis a bad Master, it need be well watch'd. When the Disciples in their zeal would have called for fire from Heaven, 'twas from their unacquaintedness with their own spirit. And 'twas in such a fit that *Peter* drew his Sword. But this is not the way of Christ, whose Kingdom is not of this world, and therefore will not that his servants fight, *Matth.* 26. 51. with *Joh.* 18. 10. and 36. 'tis like carnal men to think we do God good service by killing them that do not deserve it, as being not of our way, *Joh.* 16. 2. and usually this zeal of such men shews it self most in the presence of their leaders and dies in their absence, *Gal.* 4. 18. 2 *Chron.* 24. 2. I will not undertake to tell who are, and how many such Babes there are in our daies, but I am afraid there are too many.

9. Babes are *as* carnal in this that they can hardly bear a reproof or an Exhortation: carnal men, and Babes that are *as* carnal look on reproofs as reproaches and cannot bear them. They are not without heart risings and grudgeings

ings against them that reprove them; the *Corinthians* were nettled at *Paul's* dealing roundly with, and rebuking them sharply that they might be found in the Faith: they could hardly bear with him, but almost called him fool for his kindness and love, 2 *Cor.* 11. 1. and 12. 11,——15. the Author of the Epistle to the *Hebrew*-Babes is fain to entreat them to *suffer* a word of Exhortation, *Heb.* 13. 22. *I beseech you Brethren, suffer the word of exhortation, for I have written a Letter to you in few words.* Though one speak but a little, but in few words, they think them too many, if they like not what is said, though perhaps it concerns none so much as themselves. *Eli's* carnal Sons could not bear reproof from their Father, nor can Babes *in* carnal bear any though from a Father. And beside this, they are loth to suffer for Religion, but will rather comply and conform with & to the rudiments of this world, as the *Hebrews* with Jewish, and the *Corinthians* with Gentile Rites rather than suffer persecution. 'Tis true the *Hebrews* after they were illuminated, indured a great fight of afflictions at first, *Heb.* 10. 32. but they had weak hands and feeble knees, and began to faint and be weary, which occasioned that quickening exhortation, *Chap.* 12. which he intreats them to suffer, *Chap.* 13. 22. The Disciples themselves were scattered and fled at the smiting of the Shepherd, so tedious a thing is suffering to them that are but Babes, and *in* carnal. If thou faint in the day of affliction, thy strength is small, *Prov.* 24. 10.

10. To

10. To name no more, some of them are apt to measure Gods heart by his hand, as carnal men do love and hatred by the things before them, which is a false rule. If Gods hand be open to and fill them with his blessings, then all is well; but if his hand be shut up from, or laid upon them, then (like *Sion* of old) God hath forsaken them: this is their infirmity, for the best of this world is not good enough to be a Love token, nor the worst of it bad enough to be a token of hatred. If God slay their Son, or take away what they love, they draw sad conclusions, as if God had no respect for them: so it seems the *Corinthians* were apt to do, when God afflicted them, and therefore the Apostle tells them, 1 *Cor.* 1 1.32. when we are Judged (though for this cause, *Vers.* 30.) yet we are chastened of the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world. And so the *Hebrew* Babes were heartned by the like consideration that they might not measure Gods heart by his hand, nor his promises and love by his providential dispensations, but that he dealt with them as Sons, *Heb.* 12. 5.——13.

These (seeing I have promised to name no more) are the things (too many) wherein the Babes are as carnal; and so, as no other degree of Saints are, at least in such a degree as they are. These are naughty things and unbecoming because carnal, and therefore *Paul* threatens the *Corinthians* with a Rod, if they mend not their manners, which were corrupted the more by the evil words of an *Epicurean* sort

sort of men crept in among them, 1 *Cor.* 15. Twice if not thrice the Apostle speaks to them of these things as such whereof they might well be ashamed, 1 *Cor.* 4. 14. and 6. 5. and 15. 34. and shakes the Rod over them again and again that they might fear to be carnal any more, 1 *Cor.* 4. 18,——21. 2 *Cor.* 1. 23. and 10. 9,——11. and 12. 20, 21. and 13. 10. And now I have finished what I designed and promised, as to the doctrinal part of this Subject, having shewn, 1. That there is such a Form or state of Saints, as Babes are, inferiour to them called by St. *John*, *little Children*. 2. What their attainments and characters are. And 3. wherein they are defective and short of all other Saints, and as carnal, but a degree above carnal men, being new-born 'tis true, but as yet not washed clean from their bloods, no not comparatively as other Saints are. I now proceed to the last thing.

IV. *The Use of the whole.*

1. *By way of Examination and self-Catechizing, whether*

We are { 1. *Babes or not.* 2. *But Babes.*

2. *By way of Exhortation to all sorts,*

As { 1. *To them without.* 2. *To them within.*

1. BY way of Examination, that we may Catechise our selves and learn to know, 1. Whether we are Babes or no, whether new-born or not: and this we have great reason to do, because not only our hearts are deceitful and may abuse us by making us think otherwise of our selves than we are, and therefore 'tis foolish to trust our hearts, *Prov.* 28, 26. But because many have been actually cozened, as the foolish Virgins, &c. many have thought themselves rich who have been poor, and others have thought themselves poor who have been rich, *Prov.* 13. 7. of which former the Angel of *Laodicea* is an instance, *Rev.* 3. 17. and of the latter the Angel of *Smyrna*, *Rev.* 2. 9. that therefore we may pass a right judgement on, let us examine, our selves.

In relation hereunto 'tis but necessary that I premise some things about Conversion for the

preventing of Objections, the removing of offences, and so for the clearing of the way which leads us to know whether we are new-born, converted or not. As,

1. That the new-birth is a mysterie, conversion is a secret thing, a work that begins within, out of sight; it puzzled *Nicodemus* a Master, a Rabby in *Israel*, to think what kind of thing regeneration should be, *Joh.* 3. 3,-13. Though there be motions and visible turnings (as in the wheels of a Watch) yet the spring is within and hidden. How the Child is fashioned in the Womb is a great mysterie; but the formings of the new-birth is a greater: for 'tis a work wholly and altogether of Gods making, and 'tis curiously wrought in the secret places of the heart. 'Tis a being renewed in the spirit of the mind (which is the prime and proper seat of it) *Ephes.* 4. 23. Now the work being so inward, secret and hidden, 'tis hard to trace Gods footsteps, and to search mans heart: all the waies of God are unsearchable enough, but especially these in the great deep, as mans heart is called. *The way of a Serpent on a Rock, the way of a Ship in the Sea, and of a Bird in the Air cannot be found out*, much less can this way of God, unless he reveal it by his Spirit, which works it, 1 *Cor.* 2. 10, ——12. Though the outside of the new-man which is created in righteousness and true holiness may be discerned, yet the inwards of it are like the white name which none knows but he (I, and perhaps not every he) that hath it. There are but few can give an exact

and

and full relation and story of this thing; 'tis so secret that many things pass by undiscerned: as who knows the errours, so who knows the true workings of his heart? 'tis the hidden man of the heart, and the heart is hidden from the man. If men understand but little of earthly things, which are their element, and whereof they profess themselves masters, how much less do they know such a spiritual and heavenly thing as this, as our Saviour told *Nicodemus*, *Joh.* 3. 7.——12. experience is the best School-Mistriss in this case, of which I shall speak anon.

2. I premise this that God takes various occasions to convert men, and useth various means to bring about this work: which I mention because some are apt to think they are not converted, if it be not done in the same way as it hath with others. The first and most usual is the Preaching of the Gospel, for Faith cometh by hearing (one way or other) *Rom.* 10. 14.---17. Sometimes God takes occasion from reading to send a Preacher, as to the Eunuch, *Acts* 8. 27. *&c.* and which way soever the Word attend upon us to save us, let us attend upon the saving Word: give thy self to Reading and to Hearing, and who knows but God may give thee Faith whilst thou art Reading or Hearing? if he have not done it for thee that way already. Sometime God takes occasion to do it at a conference or a discourse, as it was at that between Christ and the woman of *Samaria*, *Joh.* 4. Sometime God doth make use of an affliction and a low-brought condition, as he

did to convert the Prodigal; and *David* found this of use for a reconversion, *Psal.* 119. 67. and 71. Sometime he takes an occasion from some mercy he hath shewn and deliverance which he hath wrought for a person, and so obliged and led him to Repentance by his goodness: such a thing was the occasion of the blind mans conversion, *Joh.* 9. and of one of the Lepers, and perhaps of the Jaylor. Sometime God takes occasion by a dream to do it, *Job* 33. 14,——30. Sometime from a mans curiosity, as he did *Zacheus*, *Luk.* 19. and many that have gone to see and be seen, or to hear words as a lovely Song (as *Austine* did *Ambrose*) have been met with, and have felt a work. When they went to hear *Paul* for Novelty, *Acts* 17. 19. yet then some believed, *Vers.* 34. Yea, sometime he stays till men be in a full careere of sinning and then meets with them as he did with *Saul*, *Acts* 9. but such cases are not ordinary. Sometime God makes use of the good conversation of others; when men will not hear the good Word of God, yet the good works (though of women) may tend to and be made use of for their conversion, 1 *Pet.* 3. 1, 2. Oh that there were more such Preachers and Preaching, for then perhaps there would be more conversion. Sometime God makes use of the patient sufferings of his Saints, as he did that of Christ to convince one and another at the time of his passion, *Mat.* 27. 54. *Luk.* 23. 39.——43. and in after Ages God blest it so much that it became a Proverbial speech, *Sanguis martyrum semen Ecclesiæ*; the

the blood of innocent and patient Martyrs became the seed of the Church.

We must not limit the holy one of *Israel*, for though he tie us to means, he hath not tied himself, but haply works on many so indiscernably that they scarce know what was the occasion taken or means used to do it: he waits to be gracious for he is a God of Judgement, he acts judiciously and takes what occasions and means he pleaseth, he best knows what will best take. If the work be done it should not be a matter of doubt to us which way it be done or by what means; yet seeing the Word-Preacht is the most usual, we should wait and watch at the door of hope, *Prov.* 8. 34. and 'tis a great obligation upon all Christians to discourse and walk holily, and to suffer patiently as Christ did, seeing God may make use of their graces to make others gracious, to convince and convert men, that they shall glorifie God, and say God is in them of a truth, 1 *Cor.* 14. 24, 25. 'tis a great mercy and blessing to be instrumental to the conversion of others, *Dan.* 12. 3. *Jam.* 5. 19, 20.

3. As the occasions and means, so the manner of working is various and different; some he draws, others he drives in: Promises prevail with some, and threatnings with others: *Boanerges* works on this, and *Barnabas* on that. Terrours affect some most, but Love other. One is broken, another is melted. Some he keeps long under the pangs of the new-birth, and they have hard labour of it, others have a more quick delivery. Some pay but a little

fine, but a great deal of rent annually; and others pay a greater fine and less rent. Many such things are with him, these are but some of his wayes; who can tell all the wayes that God takes with man, to turn back his soul from the pit? Some he leads on by degrees, others start up on a sudden, and are men almost as soon as they are born, as *Paul* was. He frowns and smiles, speaks thunders or a still voice, dismal or joyful sounds, as pleaseth him; the Spirit bloweth where and how it listeth, sometime the bluftering North, at other times a benigne South wind blows; sometime there falls much rain, other times but a little dew, but all shall prosper. It cost *Paul* and the Jaylor dear for the time, but 'twas soon over; as to *Matthew* and others, 'twas but follow me, and they follow immediately.

4. As the means and manner, so the time of conversion is various; There are no certain set times, as not before or after such a year; but God calleth at any hour of the day, at it seemeth him good: some sooner and some later, as he did labourers into the Vineyard, *Matth.* 20. 1, 7. some are called when young, others when old; the Thief was called at the last gasp as 'twere: 'twas one that none might despair, and but one that none might presume.

5. Conversion is more felt by some than others, and the conversion of some is more visible and signal than that of other men: some can tell the time and manner as well as means of their conversion, but others cannot do so: *Zachæus*, *Saul* and the Jaylor, *&c.* could tell the whole

whole ſtory with all circumſtances, but *Timothy* (in likelihood) could not do ſo, having been good (as I may ſay) time out of mind, from the very Cradle. Some know the day of conception, the moment of quickening, and can give account of the Babes ſtirring in their Womb, from time to time; when others take it for granted, or hope it upon ſome general apprehenſions only that they are with Child. Now perſons may be conſidered either as not having heard the Goſpel (as the Gentiles at firſt) or as having been notorious ſinners as *Saul* and the *Jaylor*, &c. and theſe can better tell the time and manner of their converſion; but others that have lived under the Goſpel many years, or have had the advantage of better education and more civil lives, cannot give ſo exact account of the change in them; though it may be as true in theſe as the other, yet 'tis not ſo viſible and diſcernable. A little Sugar will ſweeten Wine, when a great deal muſt go to ſweeten Vinegar: and therefore uſually well bred and good diſpoſitioned perſons are more doubtful of their converſion, than others that have had ſo great a change made as to become clean contrary to themſelves. But,

6. Though converſion be a myſterie and wrought thus variouſly, yet ſtill 'tis a converſion, and therefore is more or leſs knowable; 'tis a being tranſlated from darkneſs to light, from death to life, from the power of Satan unto God, &c. and this cannot be done without making ſome conſiderable alteration in the perſons, and working ſuch good in the ve-

ry beft, as was not there before: and though the time of converſion may not be known, yet that the perſon is converted may be known. There are ſome things, which the moſt refined nature if not renewed cannot do; ſome things which are proper to all convers and only to ſuch, as to be new creatures, new-born, things which nature cannot ape: grace is an element above nature, and nature at the higheſt cannot riſe ſo high as grace at the loweſt: 'tis not ſhew and appearance but reality that makes the difference. Braſs though gilded over is no Gold, nature though reformed is not grace: a Dog may vomit, a Sow may be waſhed, but they retain the nature ſtill; but grace makes a new man, a new nature.

The Queſtion then is by what *Criteria* or characters it may be known that a perſon is new-born? I ſhall not Anſwer only by their eating of Milk, of which before: but I ſhall lay down ſome things which are found in all true converts, and ſuch as which the beſt nature (with all the advantages of education) never reacht unto, nor can attain: to which the loweſt as well as the higheſt Chriſtian may ſet their ſeal that have known the grace of God in truth. As,

1. They deſire heartily and ſincerely not only that God may be their God, but that they may be his people: and wiſh as heartily that they may have a child-like love to him, as that he may have a Fatherly love to them. They are as willing to be his to ſerve him, as that he ſhould be theirs to ſave them. They take Chriſt Jeſus not as a Phyſitian to make uſe of him

him in a case of necessity, but as a Husband to love and live with him: and not only as a Saviour, but as a Prince to rule and a Prophet to teach them. They implicitely take whole Christ in all his offices, and not divided. And who but a new-born Soul doth? The natural man (especially if assisted by the common principles and grace of the Gospel) desires to be happy; and in relation thereunto may wish God to be his God by way of priviledge; but then he fails as to the other part of being equally desirous to be Gods by way of duty; which every Saint doth do in its measure: yea, though they have not yet attained the witness and seal of the Spirit that they are the Children of God. The least Saint feels the work, though it (if I may so speak) have not yet heard the voice of the Spirit bearing witness thereunto, and is thereby in a sure state, though it have not the assurance of it: for 'tis beyond nature at highest, with all its attainments, to desire and endeavour to serve God as well as to be saved by him; to be like him as to be lik'd of him; to be conformable to him, as to have Salvation from him; to obey commands as to enjoy promises and priviledges; to be holy, as to be happy; to have grace to glorifie God, as well as to be glorified thereby; to be in Jesus Christ, not only that there may be no condemnation, but a new creation; and to be sanctified as to be justified and saved; to live as well as to die the death of the righteous.

2. New-born ones have the Law of God in and written in their hearts, and from this as from

from the living principle they act, and bring forth the fruits of righteousness. When the Law of God is in our hearts, our hearts will be set to do it, as 'tis said, *Psal.* 40. 8. *I delight to do thy Will O God, thy Law is in my heart*; and *Isa.* 51. 7. they are said to be the people who know righteousness, the people in whose heart Gods Law is: others may do some righteous Acts, but these do it as their proper fruit springing from the root of the matter (the Law of God and his truth) in them; and so 'tis an evidence of their new-birth. 1 *Joh.* 2. every one ὁ ποιῶν τὴν δικαιοσύνην that is a righteousness-maker (as his Trade) as some are called sin-makers in opposition to these, 1 *Joh.* 3. 7, ——10.) every one that doth so do righteousness (in obedience to God whose Law is in his heart) is born of God. Now this is said of the very *Corinthian*-Babes 2 *Cor.* 3. 3. ye are manifestly declared to be the Epistle of Christ, written not with Ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not in Tables of Stone, but in the fleshly Table of the heart. This cannot be said of any but new born ones, and may be said of them that are but newly born, even Babes in Christ.

From this Law written in their heart, there follow and flow forth desires and endeavours after growth, and such as will not permit these souls to be satisfied, unless they attain it. I say it begets desires after growth, such as were clear'd before to be in Babes, from 1 *Pet.* 2. 2. For having tasted that the Lord is gracious and taken into their hearts what they have tasted,

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they cannot but desire the sincere Milk of the Word of Grace to grow thereby. They desire not only to live, but to thrive and to be lively. And though these Babes do not know or see that they grow according to their desire, yet they know that they do desire to grow, and that they would, as be planted in the house, so flourish in the Courts of the Lord, and not be trees without fruit. 'Tis much to be fear'd that they have no grace who do not desire to grow in grace; and whether they have grace enough to be saved, who can be content with only so much grace as will save them.

Again, they do not only wish and desire, but do indeavour also to attain their wishes and desires, *viz.* that they may grow; and do therefore diligently and conscientiously attend upon and use all means that God hath appointed for their growth. Naked velleities and idle wishes may be found in formalists and hypocrites, but to be as indeavourous as desirous is congruous to and only found in the new creatures, the new-born ones. *Balaam* could profess and wish like a godly man, but he instead of using answerable endeavours, practised the clean contrary: in formalists the end only is desirable, but in true Saints the means are as desirable, being not only the way to, but a part of their happiness.

Yet once more, True Converts (though but Babes) take not up and rest satisfied with desires and endeavours, unless they attain the end of desires and endeavours; or with the use of means without the end of means; now it's true these Babes attain but little, and that's the reason

reason they are so restless and unsatisfied. They have the least satisfaction of any Saints, because they are much in desire and little in injoyment, and therefore desire the more. Others take up with desires and endeavours, which these cannot do, they prosecute and pursue still, and say as *Absolom*, *Why am I come up from Gesher, if I may not see the King's face?* Hearing, Praying, &c. is not a satisfaction to them (though they do it as a duty) unless they have communion with and conformity to God seekt out and carryed on thereby: and all this is because the Law of God is written in their hearts.

3. New-born ones are for the having their sin to be taken away, and that not only by pardoning but by purging, yea though their sorrows should continue. If God should say to such a Soul, I will take away all thy sorrows, and make thee a chearful heart, thou shalt have Corn, and Wine, and Oyl enough, it would still say, O Lord, what's this if I go graceless, if my sins be not forgiven me; take away my sins Lord, though thou leave my sorrows, and make me water my Couch with tears every day, and walk mournfully all the daies of my life: do any thing with me so my sins may be done away: my heart will never be at ease till my sins be forgiven. And this is not all, but if God should further say to such a Soul, I will forgive thy sin and remember it no more to charge it upon thee, but I will leave thee under the power and bondage of it; O Lord, would this soul say, though I bless thee for a pardon and

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that I shall by that be kept from being damned, yet Lord this doth not satisfie me, I have as hearty a request to make that I may be purged, and that I may be taken from sin, as that sin may be taken from me, that I may be delivered from sins dominion as from damnation. *David* doth not only pray, *Lord blot out my transgressions*, but *Lord wash me, and cleanse me throughly from my sin*, Psal. 51. 1, 2. and (it seems) this was after the Prophet had said, *The Lord hath put away thy sin*, 2 Sam. 12, 13. and who but converted ones are of this frame? Others can be content with hearts ease, peace and good things, though they live in the love of one or other darling sin, especially if they do but entertain a conceit that God will pardon them, purging is not the thing that any do heartily mind but gracious Souls.

Beside, there is this considerable and worthy of a remark as to these new-born ones, that though they have no assurance of a pardon nor have any great conquests over their corruptions, by reason whereof they have little satisfaction and much sorrow, yet they can in their serious and sedate frames truely say, that they are glad to hear and see that other Saints do God better service than they do: they mourn that themselves are no better, and yet rejoyce that there are any better than themselves. Indeed in a fit and pang they do more than emulate, even envy those happy and advanced souls, and yet (in cold blood as we say) cannot but be glad that God hath better servants than they are; that there are Sons in his house and service,

vice, though they be but as hired Servants: Alas! saith such a poor Babe, I am one of the most worthless wretches on earth, I live at so poor, low and inconsiderable a rate, that I am ashamed of my self, and am not worthy to be called a Christian, but notwithstanding this I can through grace rejoyce, that God hath his *Abrahams*, *Davids*, *Jobs*, *Pauls*, &c. who glorifie his name at a better rate. They admire the happiness of and bless them, who stand before the Lord and minister to his name and glory; as the Queen of *Sheba* did *Solomons* Servants. Yea if at any time in any thing they have been instrumental to the glory of God and serviceable to his name and people (as the Babes were, *Heb.* 6. 10.) they are glad of it, though they have not yet the reward of it, but God seems to have forgotten it, and they themselves do scarce keep it in mind, as appears by *Matth.* 25. 37. But now take Hypocrites and Formalists, they grudge what they do, as *Mal.* 3. 14. and profels Christ Jesus out of envy to the Saints, as vying with them for a reputation, *Phil.* 1. 15, 16.

4. New-born ones will not depart from God; let God (say they) deal with us how he will, yet this is the resolve of our souls, we will never leave him nor forsake him, for all the pleasures, profits and preferments of this world; no, though he kill us we will trust in him. Though God use them like the Dogs under his Table, and feed them with but a bit and a knock too, and give them not a meal of the Childrens bread, yet they will thank him for

for what they have and wait for more, as the woman of *Canaan* did. Will an Hypocrite do this, wait and pray alwaies? I trow not. These Babes say to God as *Ruth* to *Naomi*, I will not leave thee, but will follow thee and the Lamb, though to the Grave, come of it what will; *In the way of thy Judgements* will we wait on thee, *Isa.* 26. 8. If (like *Ephraim*) they are under the chastenings of God, and be for a while as a Bullock unaccustomed to the yoke, yet they cry out again, *Turn thou me and I shall be turned*; they return and repent, they smite on the thigh and are ashamed; and God hears this as the voice of his dear child, and doth remember them, and will *surely* have mercy on them, *Jer.* 31. 18,—20. If (like *Israel*) they have followed other lovers, and God therefore hedge up their way with Thorns, yet they return to their first Husband and grant it to be their folly that they departed from him, *Hos.* 2. Though *Peter* fail of his promise and plighted troth, yet he weeps bitterly and makes it good at last, that he will rather die than utterly and finally forsake or deny him: and so 'tis with every Babe in Christ, who though they fall yet fall not away, but return and live. Only, let me leave this caution, Take not up with these words without this work, with fancy without feeling. It may be some Hypocrite or Formalist may hear this and give it out as if he had attained this; but 'tis not what the words of our mouth are, but what the frame of our heart is; 'tis not saying but feeling, not expression

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but experience that will warrant us to be in such a state. 'Tis not being able to say these things by heart, but having them in our heart, and holding them forth in our lives that will do us good.

These are the things which I lay down as the characteristical discoveries of new-born ones, which distinguish them not only from common sinners, but from the most refined Hypocrites and Formalists: I have not pitcht on many left I should clog, nor on doubtful ones left I should amuse poor Babes; but these which are essential to the new-birth state, for indeed they are all promised in the new Covenant, and wrought in all their hearts with whom the Covenant is made, and that in with all Saints as such and not with respect to degrees, as some promises are (which was hinted long since) Let us examine the Covenant and we shall find all these things punctually and particularly so, *Jer.* 31. 31, ——— 34. with 32. 38, —— 40.

1. *I will be their God and they shall be my people.* This is not only promised, but effected and wrought; and as 'tis in Gods heart to be their God, so 'tis in their heart to be Gods people; and the one and other is desired by them, which made the first head.

2. *I will put my Law into their hearts.* This is not to be laid up there as writings in a Chest to be idle and without effect, but 'tis there that they may do it, that they may fear the Lord and keep his Commandments: that they breath after full obedience thereunto, which made the second head. 3. I

3. *I will remember their ſin no more.* Which notes not only forgiving but ſubduing of ſin, *Rom.* 6 14. which makes the third Head.

4. *They ſhall not depart from me.* That is, wholly and finally: as God will not leave them totally, ſo nor they God; which is the fourth Head.

Now this is clear as the Sun, that the new Covenant Promiſes and frames are found accompliſhed in all Saints, and in none but Saints; that is, the end of all and none but redeemed ones, which is the end of the Redeemer, and that is to be holy, *&c. Tit.* 2. 14. and that becomes the aim and end of Elected ones, which is Gods in Electing, and that you may read, *Epheſ.* 1. 4. God the Father, Son and Spirit are one and agree in one. Election, Redemption, Sanctification to Salvation have one and the ſame ſubjects; and all theſe have one and the ſame deſire as to the things deſigned, they all agree in breathing after the effects of God the Father, Son and Spirits deſign, which no other perſons do.

'Tis true, theſe things may not be acted alike powerfully and diſcernably at all times, but they are rooted and riveted in them, and do more or leſs appear in their effects upon occaſion. Take the beſt of Saints, and they are not acted alwaies alike; ſome of them are eminent for a particular grace which hath appeared moſt evidently, and run moſt evenly through the whole courſe of their lives; as *Abraham* for Faith; *Iſaac* for fear, and therefore God is called the fear of *Iſaac*, *viz.* the God whom

he feared; *Jacob* for Prayer, and therefore the Seekers and praying people are called his seed; *Moses* for meekness; *Job* for patience, &c. not but that these met with some interruptions and breaks, of which weighty reasons might be given, were it seasonable here. So take any Classis of Saints, and they have variety of lessons to take out, several Books to read, and several exercises to perform; now when they are about any one of these, the rest seem not to be or to lie dormant for that time, though it be not so, but they administer a secret contribution to one another in their turns. Sometimes Saints are most exercised about their own emptiness and insufficiency; sometimes about the riches and freeness of grace; sometimes about the beauty of holiness and usefulness of good works; sometimes sorrow and fear, at another time love and joy take hold of them: by reason of this variety and turning some are prone to think that they were never converted till they came to act so and so, which is but grace putting it self forth in another way of growth; as the sap of a tree doth first in buds, then in leaves and blossomes, and then in fruit, which fruit also hath its time to ripen, and its form and colour is very various till it come to its maturity and be perfectly ripe. I take occasion to speak of these things out of tenderness to poor Babes, who are too apt to mistake and mis-judge, and to let them know that if they will judge aright of their state, they must not judge by what is proper and peculiar to an higher Classis and size of Saints, but by what

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is proper to the new-birth as ſuch, what is eſſential and makes the ſpecifical difference, which degrees do not do, *Gradus non variat ſpeciem.*

2. The next thing we ſhould Catechiſe and examine our ſelves about, is, whether we are but Babes; perhaps many a Profeſſor hath been long in the School of Chriſt, and yet is but in the loweſt Form to this day: 'tis not time and ſtanding, length of daies and many years, but experiences and attainments that denominate an Advance: the *Corinthians* and the *Hebrews* were Babes, though for their time they had been long in Chriſt. Would we therefore know whether we are but Babes ſtill, let us review the defects and carnalities of Babes ſpoken of before, and not expect a repetition of them here. As the beginnings of grace, and their eating Milk, with the other eſſential (Covenant) frames newly mentioned, do give us to know that they are Babes, new-born ones; ſo their defects and being *ſo* carnal, give us to know that they are but Babes: examine your ſelves therefore, commune with the Word and with your own hearts, compare them together, look into the Glaſs (as St. *James* ſpeaks) and ſee what manner of hearts and faces you have, and be not forgetful hearers, as you may be, though you remember all theſe Sermons word for word, *Jam.* 1. 25. Examination and Prayer hereabout is cloſe and Cloſet work, I commend it to you, and you to God, being to proceed to the

II. *Use of Exhortation.*

1. *To them without and not yet Babes in Christ, being not new-born.*

2. *To them within, of all ranks and degrees.*

1. TO them without, who are not yet new-born, but remain in a state of nature, and who cannot enter into the Kingdom of God, unless they be born again, as our Saviour assures us with no less than four Verilies, *Joh.* 3. 3. and 5. And alas how many are there who yet lie under the condemnation of the Word and their own Consciences, as having known nothing of conversion, no not in a profession, but live in a known and owned course of a sinful life? Oh that I might yet intreat, perswade and prevail with such to consider their way and the end thereof, which is Hell, if they turn not to God, and believe in Christ Jesus. To you, poor souls, I have spoken before by way of conviction and invitation too, under the two heads of Repentance and Faith, when I made Application thereof, which I intreat you to peruse and consider, that I may not speak the same things over and over. Further,

And beside that, I have two other things to say unto unto you, by way of Exhortation; 1. Do not offend any of Christs little ones, no not his Babes. 2. Be not offended with Christ

Christ and Religion, because of Babes, though they be yet but *as* carnal.

1. Let me exhort and beseech you not to offend these litt'e ones, the least and weakest of the flock of Christ: 'tis a great sin, and a sin which will be greatly punished to offend one of Christs little ones. If not for their sake or Gods sake, yet for thine own sake take heed of this sin. There is an enmity in the heart of sinners against the seed of God, which they express by reproaches and persecutions, by which they are injurious to and do offend and wrong them; but oh that they would hear and fear and do no more so wickedly, for Jesus Christ doth not only take notice of what offences are committed again his person and doctrine, but of what are committed against his people, the very least of them. Consider what himself hath said in this case, *Matth.* 18. 6,——10. *Whosoever shall offend* (i. e. despise, *vers.* 10.) *one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the Sea*: This being thus drowned was lookt on as a dreadful punishment, but that's nothing compared with being thrown into the depth of Hell, with a Millstone weight and load of thine offences about thy neck: for if Jesus Christ deal severely with them that were not merciful to his people, as he will, *Matth.* 25. 41,——45. how, oh how will he deal with them that have been cruel to his people? Especially seeing 'tis a cruelty to himself! Of this not only *their* Angels carry tydings,

Verſ. 10. but Chriſt himſelf knows it by feeling, as he tells *Paul*, *Acts* 9. 4. And he will one day ſay to non-converted ones that have ſlain his little ones, as *Gideon* ſaid to *Zebah* and *Zalmunna*, *What manner of men were they whom ye ſlew at Tabor?* and they will then Anſwer, *As thou art ſo were they, each of them reſembled the Children of a King*; to which he will reply, as *Gideon* did, *They were my Brethren, if ye had ſaved them alive I would not have ſlain you*; but now you ſhall be damned body and ſoul, I will deſtroy you in Hell. *Depart ye curſed*, take them Devil. Hear therefore and fear to deſpiſe or offend his little ones. And, Judges 7.

2. Take heed ye be not offended with Chriſt and Religion becauſe of the Babes who are yet as carnal: as it ſhould and doth oblige Gods people not to be as carnal, leſt they give the enemies of God (as *David* did) an occaſion to blaſpheme, and cauſe the way of truth to be evil ſpoken of; ſo it obligeth the men of this world not to be offended with and to blaſpheme the way of God and his people, becauſe ſome of them, *viz.* the Babes, are yet *as* carnal and walk as men. The worldly ſeed is hugely illogical and draw many *non ſequiturs*, for ſay they, *Theſe profeſſors are as bad as others, they are all alike, and this is their Religion.* Not ſo neither, for though they are as carnal, yet they are not carnal and in the fleſh as other men are, (*nullum ſimile eſt idem*) though they be too much like, yet they are not carnal men, for they are in Chriſt Jeſus; and though they take too many

ſteps

steps after the manner of men, yet they walk not (their whole conversation is not) after or according to the flesh as other men, who are in and walk according to the flesh: and though some are *as* carnal, yet all are not so, there are who are spiritual and walk in and according to the Spirit. As for them that do otherwise, 'tis not their Religion but they are to blame, for they have not so learned Christ Jesus, his doctrine teacheth not, but (*dedocet tales mores*) unteacheth them such ill manners, to walk as men. 'Tis the Devils Logick to draw an Argument from seeming to being, or from similitude to Identity; from a particular to a universal; and from the concrete to the abstract: that because they are as carnal, therefore they are but carnal and wholly so: because one is bad, they are all alike; because Professors are to be blamed, therefore Religion it self is criminal! The grace of God hath taught all *to deny ungodliness and wordly lusts, to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world*; which if Professors do not do, 'tis not graces fault but theirs, and therefore take heed ye be not offended with Christ and Religion because of them. And you professors learn from hence to walk circumspectly, lest the way and name of God be blasphemed through you; and lest Christ suffer, because you sin. Let not the world despise you, let them not have any occasion given them by you to despise you and that which is better than you, *viz.* the Christian Religion. And this leads me to the second Branch of the Exhortation.

To them within of all ranks.

1. IN General to all, to walk wisely towards them that are without and within, to be circumspect and accurate, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because our daies are few and evil. How we should walk inoffensively, yea winningly, these following Texts will tell us, *Matth.* 5. 16. with *Tit.* 3. 8. 1 *Cor.* 10. 31,——33. with *Ephes.* 5 15,——17. and *Col.* 4. 5, 6. 1 *Pet.* 2. 12,——18. with *Chap.* 3. 1, 2. and 8,——17. All Saints should exercise themselves to keep good Consciences void of offence to God and to men, both them without and them within. What other use concerned all I have taught at the beginning, *viz.* in the Application made in the Introduction, to which I refer you: what remains as to particulars, I shall reduce to two Heads, 1. An Exhortation to grown Saints. 2. An Exhortation to Babes.

1. *To grown Saints*, to whom I would say these things. 1. Remember what you were, not only when unconverted, as 1 *Cor.* 6. 11. (I speak not to that now) but what you were at your first conversion, *viz.* but Babes, for such were you: be not like *Israel* who forgat Gods work of old. Call to mind the former daies, *Forsan & hæc olim meminisse juvabit*, 'twill be worth your while and be of great use to you. Remember there was a time when you were but Babes and sucklings, and how before that God took you by the hand and taught

you

you to go, what go-carts and hold-bys you made uſe of then; remember what kiſſes you have had from his mouth when you were little Children, and how he led you forth after that to fight his battles when you came to be young men; and by fighting the fight of Faith, and uſing the ſword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, you overcame the wicked one and led captivity Captive: if you are Fathers remember him whom you have known from the beginning, who hath given you all the experiences and wiſdom with which you are endowed. Though you can eat ſtrong meat now, yet time was you could eat but Milk.

The remembrance of theſe things will be of huge uſe to you to give God the glory of your higher attainments and all your advances from ſtep to ſtep: 'twill make you greatly uſeful to the inſtruction of Babes, which is one of your great works and duties: 'twill keep you low in your own eyes, when you ſee that you owe all beholdingneſs to God for bringing you hitherto, meerly of and by his grace, not for any worth or merit of your own: 'twill help you to know that you were converted long ago, and not to think (as ſome are apt to do) that all the work was as nothing, till they came to ſuch or ſuch a pitch; which occaſions a neglect of them below that pitch, and an ingratitude to God for what went before it and led to it. Thus will it be many waies advantageous to remember the work of old.

2. Be exhorted to bring forth fruit anſwerable to your ſtate. Time was when fruits worthy

worthy of Repentance were the fruits called for, but now you are to bring forth fruits worthy of assurance, victory, and joy in the Holy Ghost. 'Tis true, God had some little praise from you when but Babes, but now he expects much more: that you bring forth much fruit and be filled with it, that you be strong in Faith, that you abound in love, that ye be filled with all wisdom and knowledge, to walk worthy of God to all-well-pleasing, and to do all to his glory.

3. Be not ashamed of your youngest brethren that are but Babes, *Paul*, nay Christ himself was not ashamed to call them Brethren; but carry it lovingly, gently and tenderly toward them; you know the heart of a Babe, for you your selves were once Babes, as 'tis said to *Israel* in behalf of the stranger, *Exod.* 23. 9. and *Levit.* 19. 33, 34. It may be some (*patres aequum esse censent nos jamjam a pueris illico nasci sensus*) poor Babes complain, that such and such do not regard them, because they are not grown up to their stature; but pray remember, these things ought not to be so, there is an honour due to the weaker vessels and uncomely parts, 1 *Cor.* 12. We should be nurses to these froward Bantlings, and crying Babes, and as *Paul* was among the *Thessalonians*, we should be gentle as a nurse that cherisheth her own children nurslings, 1 *Thes.* 2. 7.

4. Give good examples to Babes, and abuse not your liberty to their offence: I told you that Babes mind example much, and if they have bad ones given them, especially by good

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and eminent men, they are drawn aside by it; as when *Peter* dissembled, the other Jews dissembled also, insomuch that *Barnabas* (an eminent person) was carried away by that dissimulation, *Gal.* 2. 13. and saith the Apostle, take heed lest by any means your liberty become a stumbling block to them that are weak; for if any (weak and ignorant, which is a Babe) man see thee which hast knowledge to sit at meat in the Idols Temple, shall not the conscience of him that is weak be emboldened (*gr.* edified) he takes thy example for a warrant, and thinks he is edified thereby, when alas 'tis to his loss and detriment, 1 *Cor.* 8. 9,——13.

5. Acquaint the Babes with your experiences, as *Paul* did, 2 *Cor.* 1. 6,——10. and with Satans devices, as he did, 1 *Cor.* 7. 5. 2 *Cor.* 2. 11. 2 *Cor.* 11. 3. Babes have but little skill to distinguish between good and evil, between impressions from the good or evil spirit; especially if Satan transform himself into an Angel of Light: *Israel* of old was to tell the story to and write an History (of Gods dealing with them and *Amaleks* against them) for after Ages; and to instruct the children how God had dealt with the Fathers; so do you. Let the little Children tell stories of the Fathers love; the young men of his power; and the Fathers of his wisdom, in carrying on the work of Grace: how God overthrew *Pharaoh*, led them through the Wilderness, fought for and provided for them from heaven, till they came to the good Land. But,

2. 'Tis

2. 'Tis time to speak to the Babes whose case we have in hand, and so to conclude. There are three things that I would exhort Babes unto.

I. *To be glad that they are Babes.*
II. *To be humbled that they are but Babes.*
III. *To press after being more than Babes.*

1. TO be glad that they are Babes, new-born and in Christ Jesus. Glad, alas! there's no comfort for me, who am but a Babe; no, yes but there is, that thou art a Babe, though but a Babe: 'tis true, it doth not belong to thee *as* carnal, but *as* a Babe in Christ: the least work of God is great consolation to the least of Saints, *viz.* to Babes. Consider, whether this be nothing,

1. That thou hast attained to the first Resurrection, *viz.* from being dead and lost in sin; thou art called out of *Egypt*, and art called his Son, and as such brought out of *Egypt*: the work is begun, thou art new-born, and eatest Milk, the Foundation is laid, and is this nothing? who knows to what a great Tree this little Mustard-seed of Grace may grow? The Babe that lies in the Cradle may become a Father in *Israel*; and is this nothing? He that hath laid the Foundation will lay the top-stone, and thou shalt cry out with shouting, Grace, Grace unto it. God is not like the foolish Builder,

Builder, he hath caſt up his coſt, and hath wherewithal to finiſh what he hath begun, he will not be laught at and mocked as one that laid a Foundation, began to build, but could not finiſh it: though thou be a knotty piece, yet he will fit thee for this place, and perfect that which concerns thee: this work is not only that of his hand, but of his heart; and is this nothing? Pray to him and believe, as *Pſal.* 138. 7, 8.

2. Thou art not only brought out of *Egypt*, but he hath drawn thee into the Wilderneſs, and though thou be in the Valley of *Achor*, yet even there is a door of hope. Thou art bewildered, and thy motions are full of windings and turnings; now forward and then backward almoſt to *Egypt* again, that thou ſeemeſt to wander rather than to walk or to go a journey; true, but yet thou art in thy way and God is leading thee to his holy Hill, Mount *Sion*. 'Tis obſervable how differently the condition of *Iſrael* (and ſo thine) is expreſt, *Pſal.* 107. 4. with 7. in the 4. *Verſ.* 'tis ſaid, they wandred in the wilderneſs; but in the 7. *Verſ.* 'tis ſaid, he led them forth: in the 4. *Verſ.* 'tis called a ſolitary way; but in the 7. *Verſ.* 'tis called the right way: in the 4. *Verſ.* they found no (and deſpaired to find any) City to dwell in; yet *Verſ.* 7. that they might go to a City of habitation: So 'tis with thee, poor ſoul, and notwithſtanding thy unbelief and murmurings, yet he holds thy Soul in Life, and when thou art hungry and thirſty he provides food and drink convenient for thee;

and

and thy Cloaths shall not wear out.

3. Thy being a Babe hath more of incouragement than discouragement in it: Thy being a Babe in Christ is more to thy safety, than thy being *as* carnal is to thy danger, though it must be thy sorrow. Babe is the name of a Saint not of a carnal [illegible], and it makes more for thee that thou art a Babe, than it doth against thee that thou art *as* carnal. Is it nothing to thy Joy that thou art born? though thou be not yet cloathed with a robe, nor kist with thy Fathers lips? 'Twas more for the Prodigal that he was alive, than against him, that he had been dead, and came home without raggs, even naked and bare. 'Twas more for the Disciples that the Spirit was willing, than against them that the flesh was weak. 'Tis so with us as to our Babes, their being ours doth more indear them to us, than their being froward and peevish doth disingage us to them. And though the elder Brother chargeth his Father as guilty of an indiscreet and partial fondness to make so much of a Prodigal, yet he still owns it as meet that they should rejoyce, and be glad.

4. Though thou be *as* carnal, yet on conviction of this thy carnality thou art angry with it and thy self, and dost repent and abhor thy self as in dust and ashes. The *Corinthian* Babes were no sooner convinced of theirs, but they made the Apostle glad by their sorrow, seeing their sorrow wrought Repentance never to be repented of, because it was to Salvation, 2 *Cor.* 7. Yea thus it was with the Incestuous person

person himself, 2 *Cor.* 2. 4, 7. So that the Apostle on the account of this ingenuous Repentance pronounceth them clear, and him a person to be comforted. Now the same consolation belongs to thee if thou do likewise; and I am sure 'tis in thy new nature to do it, when ever thou art under the conviction of thy sin: and I can safely tell thee that sin repented of (as theirs was) will not be laid to thy charge.

5. Though thou be but a Babe yet God hath some praise from thee; 'tis true indeed he hath more from others, but yet 'tis true that he hath some from thee: thou do[illegible]elp to perfect his praise. 'Tis one of the burthens of these poor souls that they are such unprofitable servants, not only (as others are) in that they do but their duty, but alas in that they do not do their duty, but fall short of it and the glory of God: herein is God glorified when much fruit is brought forth, but as for us, say they, we bring forth but little. 'Tis true, but yet thy Mite of grace gives a measure of glory; all the good-ground Hearers brought forth fruit to the glory of God, though some more than others, *Matth.* 13. 8. When the Pharisees were displeased at the *Hosanna's* ascribed to Christ by little ones, and are angry with him that he had not rebuked them, as if they had taken Gods name in vain, for say they with a scorn, *Heareſt thou what theſe ſay? Yea*, saith he, *have ye never read, Out of the mouths of Babes and Sucklings thou haſt perfected praiſe?* Matth. 21. 15, 16. Christ hears their *Hoſanna's*

ha's with joy and gladneſs, as that which fulfils a Scripture, and helps to fill up the praiſe and glory of God. A Babe is one of the joynts and members of the Body, and ſupplies its meaſure even to the perfection of praiſe. As 'tis in Nature, there is one glory of the Heavens, another of the Earth; *One of the Son, and another of the Moon and Stars*; the Heavens declare his glory, and the Earth his goodneſs, for 'tis full of it; the Sacred and Royal Prophet doth not only admire the Heavens and the Sun, but the Moon and Stars too, and that in the very *Pſalm* where he ſpeaks of Babes and Sucklings (from whence our Saviour quotes it) *Pſal.* 8. 2, 3. For as 'tis in Nature, ſo 'tis in grace, not only the greateſt, but leſſer Luminaries; not only the higheſt but the loweſt creatures do contribute ſomething to the praiſe of God: the Sun indeed ſhines bright, and gives a great luſtre, but the Stars alſo do twinkle; ſo though an *Abraham*, &c. is ſtrong in Faith giving great glory to God, yet Gods praiſe is not fully perfected, till the Babes contribution be taken in, ſmall though it be. In the body, the leaſt member, in an Houſe the leaſt Pin hath its uſe and tends to the perfecting of the whole; and veſſels of an inferiour office ſerve not a little to eek out the glory of more honourable ones.

The Milk that the Babes do eat, doth every ſpoonful of it, give praiſe and glory to God. Repentance doth ſo, Faith towards God, ſubmiſſion to Ordinances, trembling at his Word, deſires after growth, love of the Brethren, theſe

these all praise and glorifie his name, though not with so loud a voice and so open a mouth as that (and the higher attainments) of Children, Young men and Fathers doth do. And the truth of it is, that 'tis not a little glory which accrews to God hereby; for, that these poor Babes who have so much corruption (and not without considerable temptations too) should yet be kept from Apostasie; that Grace should live (like a spark of fire in the midst of waters) and not be extinct, is a wonder; and such an one, as that 'tis not so great a wonder that other Saints of higher Forms cleave close to God, as that these do; nor that the Devil is conquered and baffled by them, as that he is defeated by these: 'tis much to the praise and glory of God and his grace, though not so actually given by them, as 'tis by others.

2. The second Branch of this Use is to exhort Babes to be humbled that they are but Babes, *i. e.* as carnal, and not past the spoon, and so incapable of having strong meat to eat, or of any more than the Alphabet of Religion, such as we Preach to sinners, *viz.* Repentance, and Faith towards God, *&c.* which is but Milk: and this especially concerns them, who are old in years, and yet but Babes as to understanding and practice, who have been professors of long standing, but little proficiency. 'Tis a prime part of the Christians ingenuity to be low and vile in his own eyes, under the sense of imperfections and defects, yea and that though God be pacified towards him, *Ezek.* 16. 60,——63.

Let Babes therefore that are as carnal, though they be in Christ Jesus, be very humble in the sense of their defectiveness, and, which is worse, their carnality. Especially considering,

1. That they have enjoyed means and helps by which they might have been more spiritual, had they not been dull of hearing. We are all careful to use means, but we should take one care more, and that is to make use of means to profit thereby, the want whereof calls for being humbled. The Apostle might well twit the *Corinthian* Babes with this, you boast of *Paul*, *Apollo* and *Cephas*, but is it not a shame to you to be carnal under such mens Ministry? The more persons are priviledged with means, the more improved should they be by the means; and if not so, they should be the more humbled for their non-proficiency. Many of you have had not only the Milk but the Cream of the Gospel, and are ye yet carnal? let it then be for a lamentation and answerable Humiliation!

2. Be the more humbled considering that many of the more refined sort of Heathens would have scorned to be so carnal as some of you: the Apostle upbraids the *Corinthian* Babes and thereby provokes them to shame by this very thing, 1 *Cor.* 5. 1, 2. It is reported commonly (and in this, *fama non est mendax*, report is no Lyar) that there is Fornication among you, and such Fornication, as is not so much as named (recorded of any) amongst the Gentiles, that one should have his Fathers Wife, and yet ye are puffed up and have not rather

father mourned. It ſhould deeply humble Chriſtians to be guilty of that which the Gentiles are not and ſcorn to be.

3. Let your Humiliation and Humility be the more, that ye have been better taught, *Epheſ.* 4. 17,——21. and that for a long time, *Paul* had ſpent a year and an half among theſe *Corinthians*, *Act.* 18. 11. and had written to them two or three times, and was yet ready to come again to correct their Babiſh-carnality, as 2 *Cor.* 12. 14. with 20. 21. and *Chap.* 13. 1, 2. Our Saviour upbraids his Diſciples with this, that he had been ſo long with them, and yet they were ignorant of the Father and of him, *Joh.* 14. 9. and another time asks them (as one grieved and angry too) *How long ſhall I be with you? will ye never learn*, &c. 'Tis with this that the Author of the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews* twits them alſo, that for their time and ſtanding they might have been Teachers, and yet were ſtill to learn, yea and ſtood in need of being taught their Primer over and again, *Heb.* 5. 12. When men have been planted in Gods Hort-yard and have been often watered with the dew of Heaven, and he comes year after year for Fruit, yet finds none, this calls for deep Humiliation. To be old men in profeſſion, and novices in knowledge and practice is that which ſhould lay us low.

4. Think of this alſo to humble you, how many that came in long after you are gone far before you; *Paul* was a Poſthume, born after Chriſt died and roſe and went to Heaven, yet out-ſtript and labour'd more abundantly than

many that lived in Christs time and Family. To allude to the Story in 2 *Sam.* 18 23,——. I may say that many like *Cushi* run first, and yet are out-run by *Ahamaaz*, who set out after him, for he run the way of the plain, when others (like *Cushi*) fetch a compass about, and are for vagaries and wandrings. The Gentiles came in last, but outrun the Jews who were first: and is't not so with you also, that some who were called but the other day, long since you, have yet out-learnt and out-wrought you? be humbled therefore.

5. Let this eck out your humbling, that as yet you are incapable of the strong meat, which God hath prepared for his: 'tis true, you are fed with Milk, which keeps your soul in life; but the choicest dainties are behind, reserved for a second course. Were you more spiritual he would lead you into his Wine-Cellar, he would feed you with Apples, and his Banner of Love would be displayed to you and spread over you: he would make you drink of his Flaggons, yea of his Rivers of pleasure, and fill you with joy unspeakable and full of glory. While you are but Babes you cannot bear this, you are ignorant of the choicest of Gospel mysteries, of the most intimate and sweetest communion with the Father and the Son; and how should this abase you and make you lay your mouth in the dust, that after so long a standing, you should be capable of no more than the common chear, the ordinary fare of the Gospel, which is but Milk, without Bread and Wine, &c.

6. Let

6. Let this help to break thine heart and make it humble, that thy being *as* carnal doth open the mouth of the wicked and carnal to cry out of and to blaſpheme Religion for thy ſake: though it be their ſin to do ſo, yet 'tis thy ſin (and ſhould be thy ſhame that 'tis thy ſin) that gives them occaſion ſo to do. Or ſay the wicked, beſide profeſſion we ſee no difference between profeſſors and our ſelves, they are as peeviſh, as humorous, as proud, as carnal as others. Alas! I beſeech thee be humbled, that thou ſhouldſt open their mouth to ſpeak evil not of thee only but of the way of truth, and lay thy ſins to the charge of Religion; *Tertullian* tells us that Chriſtians had wont to be known by the amendment of their lives and being better than other men: I, this indeed adorns the doctrine of God our Saviour, and otherwiſe men bring diſgrace and reproach upon it. If we would not do Religion (and our ſelves) the right to practiſe it, we ſhould not do it the wrong to profeſs it; yea, and ſtand in the way of their coming in, who are ready to enter, were they not put back by them that are as carnal. Saith *Paul*, *Dare any of you go to Law before unbelievers?* what will they ſay to theſe things? will they not laugh at and ſcorn you and your Religion too? Think what became of them that brought up an ill report on the good Land.

7. And laſtly, remember and forget not this, that though thou go to Heaven 'twill coſt thee dear before thou come there, that thou haſt been *as* and *ſo* carnal; 'twill bring down thy

gray hairs with ſorrow to the Grave. Thou maiſt be ſaved, yet, ſo as by fire, as *Paul* tells his Babes, 1 *Cor.* 3. 13,— 15. This fleſh and blood of thine cannot enter into the Kingdom of God, thou muſt through a Purgatory of water and fire, of Repentance and Zeal, before thou have thine inheritance among them which are ſanctified by Faith in Jeſus. Be thou therefore humbled betimes, and leave not the ſenſe and weight of all this to come upon thee when thou art on a death-bed, leſt thy latter end know more ſorrow than thy beginning, and a worſe thing befall thee then, than there did all thy life before. Be humbled for being *as* carnal. And,

3. Be exhorted alſo to preſs forward after being more than a Babe, yea than a Babe at the beſt: It ſhould not ſuffice us barely to be in Chriſt Jeſus, but we ſhould be ambitious to walk in him, *Col.* 2. 6. Yea not only to be and walk in him, but to abide in him, and to walk as he walked, 1 *Joh.* 2. 6. to be rooted and built up in him, to be eſtabliſht in the Faith, as we have been taught, and to abound therein with thankſgiving, *Col.* 2. 7. Having taſted that the Lord is gracious, ſhould quicken our appetite after the Word to grow thereby, 1 *Pet.* 2. 2. to grow in Grace and (as an help to it) in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, 2 *Pet.* 3. 18. that we may abound in Faith with thankſgiving as before; in hope, *Rom.* 15. 13. in liberality, 2 *Cor.* 8. 7. in every good work, 2 *Cor.* 9. 8. in mutual love, *Phil.* 1. 9. and 1 *Theſ.* 3. 12. in the work of

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the Lord, 1 *Cor.* 15. 58. in pleasing God, 1 *Thes.* 4. 1. in all grace, 2 *Pet.* 1. 8. There are many encouragements hereunto; as 1. Because grace hath abounded toward us, *Rom.* 5. 20. and *Ephes.* 1. 7, 8. And 2. our labour is not, nor shall be, in vain in the Lord, 1 *Cor.* 15. 58. But 3. an abundant entrance shall be ministred to us, into the Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, 2 *Pet.* 1. 8, ——11. And lest we should fear and despond as if 'twere not attainable, we are Fourthly to know this, That God is able to make grace abound, 2 *Cor.* 9. 8. Let us therefore go on to perfection; from Babes to little Children, from little Children to Young-men, from Young-men to Fathers; till we all come into the unity of the Faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, *Ephes.* 4. 13, ——16.

In relation hereunto I shall add to what hath been said, 1. Some Considerations to provoke to growth. 2. Some helps to further and promote growth. To the first, in brief, none knows but he may attain to more than a Babe and therefore should press forward on these Considerations.

1. The highest Saints (Fathers) press forward, and therefore much more should you. See how *Paul* presseth forward, *Phil.* 3. 8, ——14. Shall one that hath attained so much as he had, be so pressing, and will not you that have attained but little? Let the zeal of the highest provoke the lowest to zeal.

2. Little Grace hath but a little comfort:

Though the Babe have enough for a being, yet but a little for well-being. *Vivere est valere*, to live is not barely to be, but to enjoy ones self and to be well; as to this Life we do not take care only for so much as will keep life and soul together, but that we may live comfortably: and shall we not much more endeavour it as to our spiritual life? Little Faith is full of Fear (which excludes present joy and comfort) and is as no Faith in that respect, for so saith our Saviour, *Matth.* 8. 26. *Why are ye fearful, O ye of little Faith?* which *Mark* 4. 40. is thus expresst, *Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no Faith?* Would ye therefore have less fear and more joy? press forward then to grow in grace.

3. Little grace gives but little glory to God; 'tis true, the Babe contributes something to the perfecting of Gods praise, but 'tis very little; herein is our Father glorified when we bring forth *much* fruit, *Joh.* 15. 8. 'Tis being filled with fruits of righteousness which brings full glory to God, *Phil.* 1. 11. And *Abraham* being strong in Faith gave glory to God, *Rom.* 4. 20. If therefore you would glorifie God to purpose, grow in Grace.

4. While you are but Babes you are of little use to others; 'tis true, the least member is of some use, 1 *Cor.* 12. but 'tis of least use. A Candle may give some light, but none in comparison of what the Sun gives: Now, we should be (as *John* was) not only burning but shining lights: and our light should so shine before men, that they may see our good works,

and

and glorifie our Father which is in Heaven, *Matth.* 5. 16. But,

2. I proceed to give you some Directions by way of help and assistance, to promote and advance grace to growth: If and as ever you would grow in grace be exhorted,

1. To be humble and lowly in mind; Humility promotes us, 'tis ἀναβαινειν κάτω to ascend downward. Humility and a low esteem of our selves is the ready way to grow high. The Trees spread most upward that have the deepest roots. Before Honour is Humility, 'tis Honours Usher, *Prov.* 15. 33. He that is lifed up is like to fall, *Prov.* 18. 12. so *Heb.* 2. 4. with *Heb.* 10. 38. But the same God who takes no pleasure in, but resisteth the proud, is greatly in love with, and will assist, teach and give grace to the humble. Some Babes alas are apt to be puffed up (though without cause) 1 *Cor.* 4. 8. but pride hinders growth.

2. Be thankful for what's received: ingratefull and unthankful persons never or seldom thrive, *Rom.* 1. 21. *Because when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, they became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts were darkened, professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.* But he that blesseth God for what he hath, is like to be blest with more, as *Luke* 19. 16,——26. *To every one that hath* (thankfully acknowledged his Receipts and Improvements) *shall be given* (more) but *from him that hath not, even that which he hath* (or as *Luke* 8. 18. that which he thinks he hath or seems to have) *shall be taken from him.*

3. 'Tis

3. 'Tis no little help to growth to be united one to another in oneneſs of mind and affection; they are not like to come to much excellency that are divided in *Jacob* and ſcattered in *Iſrael*; for where there are diviſions, there is leaſt contribution of help and mutual aſſiſtance. When the Apoſtle exhorts the *Corinthian* Babes *to be perfect*, he ſubjoynes this as conducing thereunto, *be of one mind, live in peace*, 2 *Cor.* 13. 11. for Love is the bond of perfectneſs, *Col.* 3. 12, 13, 14. and the bleſſing of the God of love and peace will be with ſuch, as the Apoſtle tells them, 2 *Cor.* 13. 11. and his bleſſing maketh rich, *Prov.* 10. 22.

4. Attend conſcientiouſly and with eager deſires on the word of grace that you may grow thereby: uſe Ordinances to make uſe of them for your perfection; to which end they are as much deſigned as to bringing in, *Epheſ.* 4. 11. Paſtors and Teachers are for the perfecting of the Saints, for the edifying of the Body of Chriſt (and every member thereof) till we all come to a perfect man: *Deſire* therefore *the ſincere Milk of the Word that you may grow thereby*, 1 Pet. 2. 2.

5. Get better acquaintance with Chriſt Jeſus: The Apoſtle knew Chriſt Jeſus in a good meaſure; and yet that he might perfectly win him and perfection by him, and attain to the mark and the prize, he breaths and preſſeth after more, even the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus, *Phil.* 3. 8,——14. Babes in Chriſt know not the Father, and are unskilful in the Word of righteouſneſs; now the Fa-

the

ther cannot be known but by the Son, nor grace grow but through the distinct and excellent knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord, 2 *Pet.* 3. 18. As ever therefore you would grow in Grace and attain assurance of the Fathers love, look after the distinct and excellent knowledge of Christ, which consists mostly in being found in him, *i. e.* his righteousness, in knowing the power of his Resurrection, though it be by the fellowship of his suffering and by being made conformable to his Death (by descending that we may ascend as he did) *Phil.* 3. 9, 10. *Ephes.* 4. 9, 10.

6. Would ye grow? make use of the Promises then, which are given not only that we might escape the pollutions which are in the world by lust, and so be made partakers of a divine nature, 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. but that we might *cleanse our selves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit to perfect holiness in the fear of God*, 2 *Cor.* 7. 1. and might add grace to grace, to abound and be fruitful, as it follows in 2 *Pet.* 1. 5, —— 8. The Covenant refers to our being and birth, but the promises to our well-being and growth: if therefore *Davids* house do not grow he hath recourse to the Covenant, 2 *Sam.* 23. 5. but that it may grow, he hath recourse to the Promises, 2 *Sam.* 7. 25, ——29. As ever therefore you would enjoy what's promised and contain'd in the Promise, be careful to do that to which the Promise is made: as for instance, Would ye that God be a Father (and not only a God) to you, and you be to him (not only a people, but) Sons and Daughters,

Daughters, then be ye ſeparate and touch not the unclean thing, 2 *Cor.* 6. 17, 18. and mark it, *theſe* Promiſes, *viz.* of being a Father, *&c.* are of moſt uſe to the perfecting of us: for ſo it follows, 2 *Cor.* 7. 1. having *theſe* Promiſes (the Emphaſis is in *theſe*) let us cleanſe our ſelves, *&c.* that ſo we may injoy what's promiſed, *viz.* God as a Father, *&c.*

A little to inform you about making uſe of and improving promiſes, I ſhall (to prevent a miſtake) inlarge further on this head: Some perſons do think that the chief if not only way of improving promiſes is by believing (as they call it) than which I think there is ſcarce a greater miſtake, that is in this ſenſe; when they read or hear a promiſe (as that God will be a Father, that all things ſhall work together for good, *&c.*) they think there is no more required but to believe that God will make this good, and do as he hath promiſed: there is no queſtion but he will, for he is faithful that hath promiſed and cannot lye; but beloved let me tell you (leſt you deceive your ſelves) that 'tis not ſo much Faith as obedience and practice which is neceſſary to the enjoyment of theſe promiſes: if you practiſe the duty to which the promiſe is made, God will make it good, whether you believe it or no, 2 *Tim.* 2. 11, — 13. but if you believe it a thouſand times over and do not do the duty, God is under no obligation to make good the promiſe. If you love not God, how can you expect that all things ſhould work together for good to you, when the promiſe is made to none but

but lovers of God: so if you separate not from uncleanness, how can you expect God will be a Father to you, when 'tis promised only to them that separate, &c. Take heed then of an idle and dead Faith: 'tis true, Faith is a duty, but not Faith alone, Faith that's idle and dead; what ever promises are made to Faith, shall be made good to Faith; and what ever promises are made to Love, to Humility, to Patience, shall be made good when these graces are acted. Saith the Apostle, *Heb.* 10. 23, 24. *Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of Faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil Conscience, and our bodies washed with clean water. Let us hold fast* (this) *profession of our Faith without wavering, for he is faithful that hath promised*: by which we see that there can be no Plerophorie or full assurance of Faith (without the other qualifications therewith mentioned, *viz.* a true heart, &c.) by which we can expect the performance of promises, This I thought good to hint, that none might think Faith enough in relation to the promises without obeying in that very particular to which the promise is made. But to proceed.

7. Would you attain to perfection, be patient then: Babes are apt to be impatient and peevish, for which they have been already noted; but impatiency hinders growth; as ever therefore you would be perfect, let patience have its perfect work, then shall ye be perfect, intire and lack nothing (*viz.* of perfection) *Jam.* 1. 4. Patience is a compleating and perfecting grace, as God speaks to *Abraham*,

ham; Gen. 17. 1. *Walk before me and be thou perfect*, that is, not only sincere (as 'tis in the Margent) but patient; wait yet a while longer till I give thee seed by *Sarah*, perfect thy hitherto waiting, by waiting to the end. So the good-ground-hearers bringing forth fruit with patience, is opposed to the Thorny-ground-hearers not bringing forth fruit to perfection, *Luke* 18. 14, 15. so that patience doth not a little contribute to the bringing forth perfect fruit, and to our growing up to a perfect stature. For,

1. It establisheth the heart, makes it stedfast and immoveable, which helps to abounding and growth, as appears by the places where they are joyned together, 1 *Cor.* 15. 58. 2 *Pet.* 3. 17, 18. While persons hang loose and are tossed to and fro (as Babes are apt to be, *Eph.* 4. 14.) they are not in a growing condition; but patience doth settle, fix and establish the soul, as the Apostle tells us, *Jam.* 5. 8. *Be patient, stablish your hearts*, i. e. stablish them by patience: For, as 'tis hinted in a parallel place, *Luke* 21. 19. *In patience we possess our souls*; when as an impatient man is wavering and unstable, is uncertain, inconstant and double-minded, ever doubtful and in suspense, and therefore receives little if any thing from the Lord, *Jam.* 1. 6, — 8.

2. Patience helps the soul to wait notwithstanding disappointments and sufferings: disappointments, *&c.* are discouraging things, they dishearten, weaken and make us faint, and so put us under an incapacity of thriving; but

but patience steels and strengthens our hearts; when hope deferred makes us sick, patience gives supports and cordials, inabling to wait till the hoped and long'd for desire be granted, which is as a Tree of Life. This may be seen in such places as these, *Rom.* 8. 23, ——25, *Heb.* 10. 35, 36. and 12. 1. Both these waies (to name no more) doth patience help us onward.

8. As ever you would grow and proceed to perfection, watch over your hearts and lives, and keep your accounts well, observing how you gain or lose day by day: narrowly view your daily experiences considering what's attained and what's lacking, that you may forget what's behind (so as to rest in it) and press forward to what is yet before, as the Apostle did, *Phil.* 3. 13. They are not like to thrive that keep not their Books and Accounts well, but let all go at six and seven, and run at random: As ever you would grow, keep your diurnal, monthly and annual annotations, for else how can you discern the difference between what you were, are and ought to be?

9. And lastly, make Conscience of Prayer, your own and others: Praying Saints, and Saints Prayed for are most like to prosper. The great Apostle not only prayed himself, but often beg'd the Prayers of others (his inferiours also) for himself; much more should you, who being but lickly Saints cannot pray as much and well as you ought for your selves, and therefore should call in the help of Elders and the Church to pray for you. Read over the

Prayers

Prayers which the Apoſtle made for Babes, and make them for your ſelves. I will inſtance only in one, and with that conclude this whole Diſcourſe, 'tis that in *Heb.* 13. 20, 21. Now the God of Peace, who brought again from the Dead our Lord Jeſus, the great Shepherd of the Sheep, through the Blood of the everlaſting Covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his Will, working in you that which is well pleaſing in his ſight through Jeſus Chriſt, to whom be glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*

The

The SECOND CLASSIS IN THE School of CHRIST, Viz. Little CHILDREN.

From 1 *John* 2. 13.

I write unto you little Children, because ye have known the Father.

HAving formerly ſpoken to the firſt and loweſt Claſſis or Form of Saints, *viz.* Babes in Chriſt from ſeveral other Texts, I now proceed to treat of the ſecond Claſſis, or degree, or rank of Chriſtians, who are called Little Children: which Title is not uſed here (as ſometime 'tis elſewhere) for a name common

to all the Saints, for in that ſenſe a Babe is a Child and a Father is but a Child, but here it notes a peculiar ſtate, characterized and diſcovered by a peculiar attainment, as was cleared in the former Treatiſe, where I gave a general account of this Text: and to which I muſt refer the Reader, as for many other things.

That in the School of Chriſt there are ſeveral and diſtinct Claſſes of Fathers, Young-men, little Children, and Babes; that theſe ſtates are not to be meaſured by their age or years, but by their attainments and experiences; That there is ſomething common to all theſe; and ſomething proper to each of theſe, which cannot (at leaſt) ſo eminently be ſaid of all theſe, or of any other ſort of them; only that what ever excellency there is in the loweſt is in the higheſt (gradually) much more, and what ever defect or carnality is in the lower, is in ths higher much leſs: I ſay of all theſe things I have treated at large before, and ſhall not make any further repetition of them here.

Before I come to the next rank, *viz.* Little Children, 'twill be convenient to give an account of two or three things; 1. That what is here written to the (τεκνια) Sons or Children, which is the name in common to all theſe three following diviſions of Saints (Fathers, Young-men, and Little Children) I ſay, what ever is written to them in common (as *Chap.* 2. 1. and 12. and 28. *Chap* 3. 7. and 18. *Chap.* 5. 21.) doth more or leſs concern each of them, the higheſt as well as loweſt.

loweſt. 2. In that he writes to Fathers, that the Fathers are not paſt teaching, though they be the higheſt Form: The beſt may be yet better, Fathers may be more ſo than they are, they that have attained to moſt may attain to more, the moſt perfect may be more perfect, *Phil.* 3. 12,—15. And 3. in that he uſed ſeveral and various arguments to ingage and provoke all to the ſame things, we may obſerve that the moſt likely way to prevail with perſons (whom we ſpeak or write to) is to uſe ſuch reaſons and arguments as are moſt proper and peculiar to them: As, *I write to you Fathers* (to this and that purpoſe) *becauſe ye have known him that is from the beginning; I write to you Young-men, becauſe ye have overcome the wicked one; I write unto you little Children, becauſe ye have known the Father.*

And now to come nearer to our purpoſe; There are in this Text three ſorts of Saints denominated from and characterized by their ſeveral and ſpecial attainments and excellencies; and though many other things are wrapt up and included in and under them, yet theſe which are named are the ἀκμὴ, the *Apex*, the *Culmen*, the Top, the Crown and chief excellency of each of them: This is the Fathers, that they are perſons of great, much and long experience and wiſdom, having known him that is from, and having known him from the firſt or beginning: This is Young-mens excellency, that they are perſons of ſtrength and valour, *having overcome the wicked one*: This is the excellency of the Little Children, that they

are persons assured of Gods Love, having known him as their Father. And so this state of little Children is (we see) a middle state between Babes (whom they excel) and Young-men to whose excellency they have not yet attained, much less to that of Fathers.

In the Words you may take notice, 1. Of the subject spoken of, *viz.* Little-Children. 2. Of that which is predicated and said of them, *viz.* that they have known the Father; 3. The time of their having had this knowledge, implyed, *viz.* you have lately known the Father; 'tis not long since that you were new-born and were but Babes. For though every new-born one be (in the general acceptation) a Child of God, yet he is not a Child (as to degree, but a Babe) till he know the Father; and this some attain to later and some sooner, as the Father is pleased to make himself known unto them. The whole of what I intend to speak to, I shall reduce to these 5. Heads, 1. To shew what their proper attainment is, which is in knowing the Father. 2. How they come to this attainment, to know the Father. 3. What the result of this attainment is as to their injoyments and priviledges. 4. What is the frame of the heart and soul, as also the manner of the conversation of these Little Children. 5. After all these I shall make some Application and so Conclude, as to this Classis.

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

Of their Attainment, or their knowledge of the Father, in two Sections.

SECT. 1.

TO know the Father is sometime no more than to know or to have the knowledge of God: For, as Christ Jesus is known by the name of Lord, so God by the name of Father, 1 *Cor.* 8. 5, 6. and this name Father is in the general no more than Creator, *Isa.* 64. 8. Now many have not this knowledge of God, 1 *Cor.* 15. 34. *Joh.* 8. 19. and 8. 54, 55. *Joh.* 16. 2, 3. There are irreligious and wicked not knowing the Lord, as 'tis said of *Eli*'s Sons, 1 *Sam.* 2. 12. nor do they know that Jesus Christ was sent of God; But this knowledge the Babes in Christ have, they know the Lord, much more do the little Children; yet this is not all, there is more meant than this.

Beside, to know the Father is not only to know that God is a Father, that he hath such a name and attribute; God is often called the Father in Scripture: *The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, Ephes. 3. 14. and in many other places. *The Father of our Faith*, Matth. 23. 9. *The Father of mercies*, 2 Cor. 1. 3. *The Father of Glory*, Ephes. 1. 17. *The Father of Spirits*, Heb. 12. 9. *The Father of Lights*, Jam. 1. 17. Yet this is not all, there is more meant than so: And therefore,

Yet again, to know the Father is not meerly to know him to be the Father of all Saints in general; He is the Father of whom the whole Family in Heaven and Earth is named, *Ephes.* 3. 14, 15. There is *one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in all*, Ephes. 4. 6. And 'tis for this cause that Jesus Christ (*the first-born among many Brethren*, Rom. 8. 29.) is not ashamed to call them Brethren, *Heb.* 2. 10, 11. They are all born and begotten of God, and therefore bear not only his Name but his Image; you may spy the Fathers Image in the Babe his eye: yet this knowledge of the Father is not all.

Moreover, to know the Father is to be taught of God, or to have the unction from the holy one, whereby they are taught and know all the things which concern their Salvation, as 1 *Joh.* 2. 20, 21. and 27. which is spoken of these (παιδία) Little Children, of whom he began to speak, *Vers.* 18. which is the Word used in our Text, *Vers.* 13. yet this is not all intended, for to be taught of God is contained in the Covenant, in relation to all the seed, Babes as well as others, *Heb.* 8. 11. And this is all one with the drawing of the Father, *Joh.* 6. 44, 45. which Babes partake of. This knowing of the Father spoken of these little Children must therefore signifie some more signal, Emphatical, more excellent and transcendent way of knowing the Father beyond what is attained by any below them in the School of Christ; which is called the excellency of knowledge, *Phil.* 3. and where-

of

of I come now to speak more distinctly

SECT. 2.

TO know the Father according to the scope and intendment of the Text in relation to the Little Children, is to know him by way of interest and experience: 1. By way of interest, as their Father, to know themselves to be his Children; and so it notes a state of assurance. 'Tis a reciprocal knowledge in a relative notion, like that of the Spouse, *I am my beloveds, and he is mine*; to be able to say as *Thomas, My Lord and my God.* Though every Child of God (as Babes) cannot say, *My Father*, yet every of the Little Children can say, *My Father*; and not only, *Abba Father*, but *My Father*: according to *Jer.* 3. 19. *I will put thee among the Children, and thou shalt call me, My Father.* Our Saviour promised his Babe-Disciples, that (when the Spirit was poured out upon them) in that day they should know their union with and interest in him, which was all one as with and in the Father, *Joh.* 14. 8,——20. and at that time he (by his Spirit) would shew them plainly of the Father, *Joh.* 16. 25. with *Joh.* 14. 26. The great thing (one of them) among others, which the Spirit was to declare, was their interest in and union with the Father, and with Christ *Joh.* 16. 13,——15. with 1 *Joh.* 5. 19, 20. and *Joh.* 17. 5. to assure them of Love.

2. 'Tis to know the Father in a way of communion and experience, 1 *Joh.* 1. 3. they

find the communications and impartings of his Fatherly Love. Some have intereſt in a Father, *Yet ſee not the Kings face* (as was *Abſaloms* caſe, though called to Court) but theſe have a knowledge of injoyment; they find and feel his Love ſhed abroad into their hearts; the light of his countenance is lifted up upon them, and they walk in the light and joy of his Salvation, 1 *Joh.* 1. 3—7. They hear the joyful ſound of my Son and my Daughter, my pleaſant and beloved Child *in whom I am well pleaſed, Thy ſins are forgiven thee, and thou art mine.* They find the Father falling on their neck and kiſſing them with the kiſſes of his mouth, embracing them in his arms, and taking them into his boſom: And this indeed is their knowledge of the Father, *viz.* knowing him in intereſt and experience, union and communion: They feaſt with the Father and on his Love, as the Prodigal did; after his Father had ſealed his Love with a kiſs, Oh how ſweet and pleaſant was the entertainment and communion! They rejoyced.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

How they come to and by this knowledge of the Father, in three Sections.

SECT. I.

I Have ſhewn you the attainment of Little Children, which is a ſenſible aſſurance of the Love of God in the injoyment of union and communion with him. The next thing is to ſhew how they come by and unto this knowledge: and that is by the working and witneſſing of the Spirit; I put both together, becauſe though he may work where he doth not witneſs (as in Babes) yet he never witneſſeth but where he hath wrought, as *Rom.* 8. 13, ---16. where 'tis obſervable, that mortification, *ver.* 13. being led by the Spirit, *Verſ.* 14. and being in part a Spirit of Adoption and Prayer, *Verſ.* 15. did preceed the witneſſing with their (and ſo doth before witneſſing with our) Spirits that they were, or we are the Children of God, *Verſ.* 16. ſo 1 *Cor.* 2. 12. which he ſpeaks of the ſpiritual ones and not of Babes, as *Verſ.* 13. which may be read, expounding or communicating ſpiritual things (either in ſpiritual words, oppoſed to words of mans wiſdom, going before, or) to ſpiritual perſons, in reference to what follows, in the latter end of this and the beginning of the next Chapter.

Again,

Again, 1 *Joh.* 3. 24. where he ſpeaks of the aſſurance or knowledge of theſe Saints dwelling in God, and Chriſt, and he in them, and that he abideth in them, by the Spirit which he hath given them; but before he mentions that, he doth characterize them by keeping his Commandments: ſo that the work precedes the word, as I may call it, or witneſs of the Spirit. In relation to this more things will be ſaid anon, only at preſent I ſhall take occaſion from what hath now been ſaid to make ſome diſcoveries concerning the perſons that God doth uſually call, pick and ſingle out (from among his Babes) to put them among the Children, and to give them aſſurance.

SECT. 2.

Diſcovering the perſons that God ſingles out to place them among the Little Children, and ſo give them the aſſurance of his love and being their Father.

PErhaps ſome poor ſouls, among the Babes (for whom I have a great concern) hearing what hath been ſaid may be inquiſitive to know if there be any hopes for them to come to this attainment of the little Children; that they may alſo be kiſt with the kiſſes of his mouth, that they (who are ſick of love for him) may be brought into his banqueting houſe, ſtayed with Flaggons, comforted with Apples, and that the banner over them may be Love,

Love, *Cant.* 2. 4, 5. and for their sakes I shall make search (though it may seem a digression) to find out the footsteps of Gods way in this particular case. But before I enter upon it, 'twill be necessary to premise 2. things.

1. That God is free in his choice, and may chuse out whom he please, his Spirit bloweth (this gale of knowledge and assurance of the Fathers Love) when and where he pleaseth; 'tis no trade-wind, if I may so say. God is not under any obligation, nor is bound to any man, but to whom he pleaseth: as he shews mercy to whom he will, so 'tis what degrees of mercy he will to any; persons and times are wholly at Gods disposes; 'tis not in him that willeth nor in him that runneth (which refers to the story of *Isaac*'s blessing *Jacob* instead of *Esau*) but in God that sheweth (this as all other) mercy.

2. God hath been pleased to pick and chuse out some persons upon whom he hath fixed so special a love as to make them his darlings, to make himself known as a Father to them. Among all the Disciples, *John* was he whom Jesus loved (*viz.* peculiarly) as 'tis often mentioned by the Evangelists; he loved all his Family, but *John* was his bosom-disciple and favourite: As when Fathers have many Children, only one is *she* beloved, and kist more often than all the rest ('twas *Joseph*'s case beyond all his Brethren, *Gen.* 37. 3.) so it is here: God is pleased to pitch upon some to shew special manifestations of his love unto them. And he hath done it usually (and promised to do it) to such as these.

1. To

1. To such as come in to his service betimes; they that seek him shall find him sooner or later, but they that seek him early shall be sure to find him betimes and that right early, according to *Prov.* 8. 17. *I love them that love me, and they that seek me early shall find me.* They that love him (so as to obey him) shall know his and the Fathers love in its manifestations, *Joh.* 14. 21. and 23. and the sooner their love is manifested the sooner his is. The reason that many give why *John* was the beloved Disciple, is this, That he came in to Christ while very young. We have a common affection to all Children *as ours*, but if we find a towardliness and ingenuity budding and blossoming in any very timely, it endears them to us, and we have a peculiar and special affection for them, and use to shew it by kindnesses, tokens, smiles, &c. and truly God himself doth usually do so. *God is love, and he that dwelleth in love* (of God and the Brethren) *dwelleth in God, and God in him*, 1 *Joh.* 4. 7, 12, and 16. and usually, the sooner our love appears, he accordingly manifests himself to us and lets us know that he loved us first, *Vers.* 19. with *Chap.* 3. 24. The Scripture records them as special favourites, who were converted and did turn to God, when they were young: God remembers the kindness of *Israels* youth, and the love of espousals, which was while they were young, and went after him in the Wilderness, *Jer.* 2. 2. and then had they wonderful discoveries of his love. Not to mention *Abel*; *Joseph* was very gracious and tender-hearted, for he could not bear with

the

the wickedneſs of his Brethren, even then when he was but ſeventeen years old, *Gen.* 37. 2. and preſently hereupon God appeared to him, as to *Solomon*, twice, *Verſ.* 4. and 9. *Samuel* miniſtred to the Lord, while yet a very Child for years, 1 *Sam.* 2. 18. and 3. 1. to him did the Lord appear, *Verſ.* 4. and though at firſt he underſtood not the voice and Word of the Lord, *Verſ.* 7. yet ſoon after he did, *And Samuel grew and the Lord was with him*, Verſ. 19. *Joſiah* was well given (as we ſay) and very good at ſixteen years of age: he began to raign at eight years old, 2 *Chron.* 34. 1. and in the eighth year of his reign (which was the ſixteenth of his age; while he was yet young (as the Text remarques it) he began to ſeek after the God of his Father *David*, and in the twelfth year (when twenty years old) he began to purge *Judah* and *Jeruſalem*, *Verſ.* 3, &c. Now how dear he was to God, and what a manifeſtation of love he had, you may ſee, *Verſ.* 26.——28. I might inſtance in many more; as *David*, *Moſes*, *Daniel*, the three young men in *Daniel*, *Timothy*, &c. But this ſhall ſuffice to have ſhewn, that God doth uſually and ſignally manifeſt his love to them that are Godly betimes, while they are yet young. This lays a great obligation upon and gives great incouragement to perſons to come in betime, to remember, &c. *Eccleſ.* 12. 1.

SECT.

SECT. 3.

A Continuation.

2. GOD hath been pleased to pick out such to shew his fatherly love to, as have lain under deep humiliations for sinning against God, though it have not been of long continuance, and which it would have been, had not he made himself known as their Father, *i. e.* loving of them: When the Prodigal came to this, that he was pincht with the sense of having sinned against his Father (as well as felt the sad effects of it, in being *tantum non* almost dead) the Father runs to meet him, and falls on his neck and kisseth him; thus he knew the Father and had assurance of his Love. When the Spouse had undergone an hard winter of humiliation, and hid her self in the clefts and secret places, as being ashamed to lift up her face or voice to God, she then hears the joyful sound, *Rise up my Love, my fair one, my Dove and come away*, Cant. 2. 10, ——15. and in the next fifteenth Verse she concludes (as one that had assurance) *My beloved is mine and I am his.*

'Tis said of *Manasseh* (though he had been desperately wicked) yet that when he was in affliction he besought the Lord, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his Fathers, 2 *Chron.* 33. 12. and 'tis presently added in the 13th *Verse* that God heard his supplication, *&c.* Then, and then *Manasseh* knew that the Lord

Lord he was God, *viz.* gracious and forgiving sins. *David* no sooner confest his sin (as against God) he doubles it, *Against thee, against thee*, Psal. 51. 4. but God forgave him, and told him of it too, *Psal.* 32. 5. with 2 *Sam.* 12. 13. see more to this purpose in *Isa.* 57. 15. and 66. 2. *Jer.* 31. 20. all which doth confirm what *David* said in this case, *Psal.* 51. 17. *A broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise*, which is a μειωσις a diminutive expression, but full of signification; for 'tis as much as if he had said, thou wilt cherish it, revive it and make it glad with the joy of thy Salvation. This lays a great obligation upon persons what to be, and gives them great incouragements when they are, though they be greatly and deeply humbled.

An *Objection.* Oh alas for me saith some poor soul! I have been under humiliations a long time, sin hath cost me dear, my bones (as *David* said) yea and mine heart have even broken with sighs and groans, and I am still watering my Couch with my tears; yea they are my drink; and yet I cannot obtain a smile, not a good word nor a good look from God: but he seems to call me Dog and cast me off! wo is me!

Answer. But poor soul, remember, 1. What I newly said, that God is not bound to make himself known as a Father to thee; he will not be commanded into this condescension: nor must thou think to bribe and compound with him by Prayers and Tears. 2. Remember that though God have taken vengeance on some

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mens sins, yet he hath forgiven them, *Psal.* pp. 8. and who knows but he may deal so with thee, and not turn thee into Hell, nor deal with thee as thine iniquity deserves, though he make thee know much (and yet much more) sorrow and smart. 3. Consider that perhaps thine humiliation hath been hitherto but legal and selfish; that thou hast been more concern'd that God was displeased with thee, than that he was displeased by thee; that thy Tears have been more for the shame and pain than for the sinfulness of sin as against God: if so, be humbled for this also, and in due time he will exalt thee to a better condition, or save thee at last with a notwithstanding.

3. God doth usually manifest himself (and his love) as a Father to them that hunger and thirst after, and are greatly in love with his Son Jesus Christ: in him God is well pleased, and declared from Heaven, That he was his beloved Son; and he is pleased to do the like for them that love his Son: God will that we honour the Son as we do the Father, *Joh.* 5. 23. Now him that honoureth me (and consequently that honoureth my Son) I will honour, saith the Lord. What honour will God confer upon such? *viz.* they shall be called (not only be but be called, manifested and declared to be) the Children of God, and *behold what manner of love this is!* 1 Joh. 3. 1. When the Spouse was sick of love, she was much made of: and to *Mary* who loved much, there was much forgiven, and special manifestations of love made unto her. Our Saviour tells his Disciples that

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the Father loved them, for this very reason because they loved him; and that shortly they should have clear and plain manifestations of the Father, *Joh.* 16. 25.——27. according to what he promiseth to all that love him, *Joh.* 14. 21.——23.

4. God hath promised to be known as a Father to them that do separate from and are not unequally yoked with unbelievers, and that do not touch the unclean thing, 2 *Cor.* 6. 14, 17, 18. which is more (as to manifestation, love and joy) than to be known to us as our God, *Vers.* 16. with *Heb.* 1. 5. *Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate*, saith the Lord, *touch not the unclean thing*, and I will receive you (*viz.* into my favour, embraces and bosom) and I will be a Father to you, and you shall be my Sons and Daughters; and you shall be treated accordingly. For this reason was Christ himself anointed with the oyl of gladness above his fellows, *Heb.* 1. 9. and as any of his are conformable to him in the separation (which love of righteousness and hatred of iniquity makes) the more are they like to be anointed with the oyl of gladness above their fellows.

5. God usually gives out manifestations and assurances of love to such of his as are about to do and suffer great things for him; and this he gives them as a preparation thereunto. Christ Jesus had the voice from Heaven a little before he entred upon his ministry. The Apostles had the Spirit sent to prepare them for doing greater things than they had done in Christs time.

And the reaſon that *Paul* had ſo early an aſſurance of his election (and being dearly beloved) of God, was becauſe he was preſently to go about great undertakings and to undergo great ſufferings, *Acts* 9. 15, 16. ſo that he in a very little time in a few daies, paſt from the Babe-ſtate to that of a little Child, and from thence into that of a Young-man Saint: which few ſo ſuddenly do but on ſuch an occaſion as this. Thus have I diſcovered ſome of them (I cannot ſay all, for there is no confining nor limiting of God) to whom he is pleaſed to make himſelf known as a Father, to call them out of the Form of Babes, and to place them in the ſecond higher Form, that of Children; and to give them aſſurance of his love that they may ſay unto him, Thou art our Father. Though I cannot ſay for whom of us God will do this, yet according to theſe preſidents 'tis more than probable, that if we be found among this number, we ſhall in due (and it may be in a little) time know the Father. But I muſt proceed to ſhew ſomething more largely how he is thus made known, by the witneſs of his Spirit.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Continued and inlarged.

Shewing how they come to know the Father by the witneſs of the Spirit, in five Sections.

SECT. 1.

AT the beginning of this Chapter I began to ſhew how they came to know the Father, or (which is equivalent and all one) that they are the Children of God and dearly beloved of him; and that was by (not barely the working of the Spirit in them, but after and over and above that, by) the Spirit witneſſing to them, clearing up that work to be of God which is wrought in their own hearts and ſpirits, *Rom.* 8. 18. Here are two witneſſes (and both Spirits) that out of the mouth of two knowing witneſſes, this thing may be eſtabliſht: our ſpirit affirms, and the Spirit of God confirms. Our ſpirit knows what acts and workings are wrought in us and by us; our ſpirit affirms, that ſuch Repentance, Faith, Love, *&c.* there is in us, but whether this be wrought according to God our ſpirit by it ſelf cannot tell without and until the Spirit of God bear witneſs to it, that it is according to the Will of God, *Rom.* 8. 26, 27. with 1 *Cor.* 2. 10, 11, 12. of which I have given ſome ac-

count above in this, and more in the former Treatise of Babes. From whence I infer these two things.

1. That this witness of the Spirit is not a thing common to all Saints (for Babes have it not, though they have the things which do assure, yet they have not assurance, because they have not the Spirit witnessing with their spirit) 'tis not a thing that runs parallel with saintship, as having the work of the Spirit doth: *If we have not the Spirit of Christ we are none of his*, that's true, *Rom.* 8. 9. but 'tis as true, that we may be his, though we have not the witness of his Spirit in us; for we are his before we have the witness of it; and the witness doth not make us so, but the Spirit finding us to be his, doth witness and declare that we are his. The witness doth not make us but manifest us to be, and to us that we are the Children of God, as the Text (and thing it self) is clear, plain and full, *Rom.* 8. 16. That which is witnessed to, must be before 'tis witnessed unto. I shall add but one Text more to confirm this, *Ephes.* 1. 13, 14. where this is evident and apparent, that as they heard before they believed; so they believed before they were sealed with the holy Spirit of Promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance; and which we had a little before we had this seal and earnest. So that we were the Children of God by Faith, *Gal.* 3. 26. before we have the witness of being Children. And though it be said, 1 *Joh.* 5. 10. that *he who believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself*,

himself, as if every Believer had it; yet I have two or three things to say hereunto, 1. That St. *John* perhaps writ not to Babes, but to all the higher Forms, (of Children, Young-men, and Fathers) and all these indeed have the witness (of the Spirit) in themselves: But 2. If we take in all (Babes among the rest) it may also be said of them that they have the thing which doth witness, and the witness of their own spirits; but it will not thence follow that they have the witness of the Spirit or assurance, which is the thing that I am speaking to. 'Tis as true that the three witnesses in earth (in us below) agree in one, as 'tis that the three witnesses in Heaven are one, *Ver.* 7,8. Yet all three do not give out their witness all at once; the water and blood may and do witness before the Spirit doth. Yet again, 3. The witness in himself may be understood (and I think most properly) of that which is witnessed, which is, that God hath given us Eternal Life, and that by and in his Son, *Vers.* 11. And accordingly he that believeth hath both the Son and Eternal Life in himself, *Vers.* 12. 'Tis already begun in every Believer, though every one hath not the assurance of it, as is implyed in the thirteenth Verse. Therefore,

2. I infer that this witness of the Spirit is not barely or only the working of Grace (by the Spirit) in our hearts, but something added thereunto, and superadded thereupon, beyond the gracious qualifications, which are called, *The fruits of the Spirit*, Gal. 5. 22, 23. Whether it be a light shining upon their graces

and making them clear; or whether it be the Application of ſome one or other promiſe made to ſuch graces; or whether it be ſome immediate eradiation and beaming forth of love from God upon the ſoul, it matters not; it may be by any or all of theſe waies. Let me a little illuſtrate it, by the heat and light of the Sun; The working of the Spirit is like to the heat and influence of the Sun, which reacheth all things; but the witneſs of the Spirit is like the light of the Sun, which ſhines not on all places at once; the work and influence of the Spirit reacheth all Saints, but the witneſs of the Spirit doth not ſhine upon all Saints at once, nor upon all in the ſame degree: Yea, I am apt to believe that aſſurance is a very great rarity, and not ſo much enjoyed as talked of, or pretended to. I have read of one Iſland, of which it is ſaid, that the Sun ſhines on it more or leſs every day of the year: it may be there are ſome ſuch Iſland-Saints, but I am inclinable to think, there are not many of them; becauſe, as I have ſomewhere hinted before in the Treatiſe of Babes, the greater part of Gods Children have not (I fear) yet attained to be little Children, to know and have aſſurance of the Fathers Love. 'Tis true the Fathers have; but how few are they? and that the conquering young men have; but how few are they? yea that the little Children have; but how few are they? There was but one *John* among the many Diſciples. However this is clear, that they who are of this Claſſis (be they few or many) have attained to aſ-

ſurance,

ſurance, and it may be ſaid of them as *Pſal.* 89. 15, 16, 17. *Bleſſed are the people that know the joyful ſound, they ſhall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance, in thy name* (which is gracious, *Exod.* 34. 6. named upon them) *ſhall they rejoyce all the day, and in thy righteouſneſs* (the Lord our righteouſneſs, *i. e.* Chriſt, *Jer.* 23. 6.) *ſhall they be exalted; for thou art the glory of their ſtrength, and in thy favour our horn ſhall be exalted!* And now this gives me occaſion to conſider, 1 What this witneſs is. 2. How it may be diſcerned from illuſions of Satan, or the pretenſions and preſumptions of our own hearts.

SECT. 2.

Shewing what this witneſs is in three things; it is clear, ſure and powerful.

THis witneſs of the Spirit (by which we know the Father as ours, and that we are the Children of God) is, 1. Clear and perſpicuous; 'tis no dark, cloudy diſcovery of a thing, but bright and illuſtrious: this brings evidence and demonſtration with it. Like him who at firſt ſaw men walking as Trees, but at the ſecond touch ſaw all things clearly, *Mark* 8. 23,—25. This is not like the Oracles of the Heathen, a Trumpet which gives an uncertain and dubious ſound; nor like that of our own hearts, which though it often excuſe, yet it often accuſeth and leaves us doubtful which to take for truth: no, this wit-

nefs is not perplexed, nor tells either falſe or feigned, dark or dubious ſtories. He that runs may read it, 'tis written in ſo fair and legible, in ſuch Text-hand and Capital and Golden Letters. 'Tis that we may know, 1 *Cor.* 2. 12. (*Vt certo noſcamus, non fluctuante conjectura*) 'tis not a conjecture, a perhaps, or, it may be, but as clear as the Sun in its Meridian brightneſs and ſtrength. This witneſs doth not leave the ſoul under diſputings and fluctuations, it takes off all Scepticiſme, the thing is paſt diſpute. 'Tis not like the Spirit of the world which is ambiguous (as the Oracles newly mentioned) that may be interpreted *pro* and *con*, for or againſt (like *Aio te Æacida Romanos vincere poſſe*) but like the Oracles of God, of a clear and certain, and of an aſcertaining and aſſuring ſound. For,

2. As 'tis clear 'tis a ſure Teſtimony, 'tis true and faithful, and infallible: what the Spirit of God ſaith is as true, as that God is, and that God is true. This witneſs can be no otherwiſe, for 1. The Spirit which beareth teſtimony is the Spirit of truth, and therefore a Spirit of conſolation, *the* Comforter. He cannot lie, he cannot deceive, 'tis not only againſt his name but his nature which is contained in his name, *The Spirit of truth*, in oppoſition to the Devil, the deceiving ſpirit and father of lyes. No lye is of the truth, nor of the Spirit of truth; this Spirit guides into all truth, and nothing but the truth: he never bears witneſs to Hypocrites or Formaliſts (but only to new-born ones) that they are the Children

dren of God. 2. As the Spirit of truth cannot deceive, so he cannot be deceived, for he knows the deep things of God and men; what is in Gods heart to us, 1 *Cor.* 2. 10, 11. and what is in our hearts towards God, *Rom.* 8. 26, 27. 'Tis a vanity as well or ill as Villany to lie to the Holy Ghost, *Acts* 5. 3. for he cannot be deceived, nor will be mocked; no nor can he be mistaken, for he knows the deep things of God, and of man, though a mans heart be a great deep also. This witness of God is true and sure: if we receve the witness of men, the witness of God is greater. 'Twas *Pauls* great comfort that God was his witness, *Rom.* 1. 9. 1 *Thes.* 2. 4, 5. he would not satisfie himself with this, that he knew nothing by himself, but as he was approved of God so he expected his Justification, 1 *Cor.* 4. 3, ——5. 2 *Cor.* 10. 17, 18. This witness is clear, true and sure. And therefore,

3. 'Tis a powerful witness, for it satisfies and settles the Spirit of a man in a quiet, serene, peaceable and assured frame: the soul is carried by it above bondage and fear, 2 *Tim.* 1. 7. 'tis like an oath that puts an end to strife and Controversie, *Heb.* 6. 16. and so affords strong Consolation, *Vers.* 18. The soul injoys God and it self in Halcyon-daies and in an undisturbed calm of assurance; the soul retires into rest, because the Lord hath dealt bountifully with it, and it is upheld by his free and freeing Spirit, which hath set it at liberty and filled it with Glory, 2 *Cor.* 3. 17, 18. And yet further to shew the influence and power of this

this witneſs (by which the Children know their Father) I ſhall diſcover ſeveral other effects thereof, which though I might refer to another part of this diſcourſe, *viz.* either that which is to ſhew the injoyments, or that which is to ſhew the frames of theſe Children, yet I ſhall chuſe to place ſome of it here in a few particulars.

SECT. 3.

Shewing what the effects of this witneſs are, and the influences they have upon the Soul and Spirit of the Children.

1. THE Soul that hath received this witneſs is filled with a great deal of joy; of which though I ſpeak, yet 'tis joy unſpeakable and full of glory; yea though the perſon be in the midſt of afflictions, temptations and ſufferings, yet the Spirit of God and of glory reſts upon it, and dwells there, 1 *Theſ.* 1. 4, 5, 6. 1 *Pet.* 1. 6, 7, 8. and *Chap.* 4. 14. 'tis ſo great, that there is want in the words that are, and want of more words than there are to expreſs it ſignificantly; this work cannot be worded: 'tis ſuch an experience as comes not under expreſſion. All the Eloquence in the world cannot acquaint you with the ſweetneſs of this honey, ſo well as the taſte can and doth do. 'Tis like the new name, which no man knows but he that hath it; a ſtranger doth not intermeddle with this joy. And as none knows

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it but he that hath it, so he that hath it cannot make it known as he hath it. If a single witness, that of a mans own Conscience, afford so much joy, as the Apostle found it did, 2 *Cor.* 1. 12. what incomparable joy must that be which flows from a double witness, *viz.* *That of the Spirit bearing witness with our spirit, that we are the Children of God:* this is the joyful sound, it's such Musick as makes the Soul to leap and dance for joy, *Hos.* 2. 14, 15, 16. They were Babes and under bondage in *Ægypt*, but now they sing like the Children that had heard the joyful sound of the Silver Trumpets, proclaiming love and peace, in their youth they sang when God had proclaimed them his Sons and first-born, and called them (his Sons) out of *Ægypt*.

2. Notwithstanding this joy, yet (consistently enough) they blush and are ingenuously ashamed in the sense of their former sinfulness, which made them unworthy of such favour, yea worthy to have been Children of wrath for ever: The Fathers lips were no sooner off from them of the returning Prodigal, but the first words he utters are, *Father I have sinned against Heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son*, Luk. 15. 20 21. And this confession was a great part of his gratitude, and so taken by his Father; for this interrupts not their feasting and rejoycing together. This ingenuity is an effect of this assured reconciliation, as 'tis in *Ezek.* 16. 62, 63. *I will establish my Covenant with thee, and thou shalt know that I Jehovah* (viz. *gracious and merciful*)

merciful) *that thou maist remember* (*thy waies*, Vers.61.) *and be ashamed*, &c. but when this? *When I am pacified toward thee for* (or notwithstanding) *all that thou hast done, saith the Lord.*

3. By reason of this Testimony the little Children have a great deal of confidence and boldness towards and with God. *If our hearts condemn us not, we have confidence towards God*, 1 Joh. 3. 21. but how much more when by the Spirit which he hath given us we know that he dwelleth in us and we in him, *Vers.* 24. This is the perfecting of love (*viz.* assurance is) love with us made perfect, which gives us not only a boldness at the throne of Grace, 1 *Joh.* 3. 21, 22. with 5. 14, 15. but in the day of Judgement, *Chap.* 4. 17. for there is no fear in love (thus made perfect) but it casteth out fear, and fills with confidence and boldness, familiarity and freedom.

4. The little Children having received this Testimony long exceedingly to be with their Father; not only to have their affections and conversations in Heaven, but to be personally there. Few Saints are willing to die that are but Babes and know not the Father; and I fear if God should not take them to Heaven before they were willing and desirous to die, I say I doubt that Heaven would be very thinly peopled, as to that sort of his people. But when they have got assurance that God is and Heaven shall be theirs, they sing their *nunc dimittis* with the reverend good old man (*Simeon*) *Now lettest thou thy Servant depart in peace*,

peace, for mine eyes have seen thy Salvation. And not only *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* 1.——8. and *Phil.* 1. 23. but all the seed (that have received this Testimony, the first-fruits and earnest of happiness) do sigh and groan and long, yea and think it long till they be set free, *Rom.* 8. 23. While here they are absent from the Lord, and 'tis not without self-denial that they are willing to stay here: but while they must be here, they are hugely ambitious to be acceptable to God, as 'tis 2 *Cor.* 5. 9. and to serve the Churches good, as 'tis *Phil.* 1. 23, 24. They are sure that though they suffer with Christ yet they shall be glorified together, *Rom.* 8. 16, 17. and therefore they would (as they are bid) hasten his coming, and Pray, *Come Lord Jesus, come quickly*: And surely might they have their wishes, either Christ should come to them, or they would go to Christ within a very little while. But yet remembring that they are not their own, and that they serve not God only for their own advantage, but his glory; they are made willing to wait *all the daies of their appointed time* (though it be a warfare, as 'tis in that Text in *Job*) *till thier change come*, *Rom.* 8. 23, 24, 25. As much as they long to be at home, they would make no more hast than good-speed. This much of the first thing. The second follows. Ephes. 1. 13, 14.

SECT.

SECT. 4.

Shewing how the Teſtimony of the Spirit may be diſtinguiſhed from deluſions of Satan, and the preſumptions of our own hearts.

IT may be ſome or other may be yet fearful and ſuſpicious leſt they ſhould miſtake and be deceived; and ſo meet with the true miſeries of falſe joyes: 'tis all one to the Devil which way any go to Hell ſo they go there; whether through the common road and dirty high-way of prophaneneſs, immorality and irreligion, or through the Fields and pleaſant walks of a Form of godlineſs, which hath its Joys, Raptures, Tranſports and Ecſtaſies too; for the evil ſpirit doth ape the good one, and that he may the more facilely and undiſcernably deceive, he puts on the garb of an Angel of Light. How therefore ſhall we diſcern whether the Teſtimony, which we think we have, be ſound and good or but feigned and counterfeit? I confeſs 'tis good to watch and be circumſpect, becauſe of our adverſary the Devil, who is ſeldom more our adverſary than when he pretends to be our friend, as he did to Eve and to Chriſt himſelf; but yet they that have the Teſtimony of Gods Spirit are ſecure and ſafe, though they that have it not cannot be ſo, what ever preſuming confidences they may entertain themſelves with. I ſhall therefore indeavour

deavour to clear this thing, that none may be hardned through the deceitfulneſs of ſin, or Satan, or their own hearts. In relation whereunto I ſhall lay down three Rules, to which though I purpoſe not to ſpeak much, yet I hope to ſpeak much to the purpoſe; having firſt premiſed this one thing; that they cannot have the witneſs who have not the work of the Spirit; and conſequently they cannot have the witneſs of the Spirit, who have not the witneſs of their own ſpirit, or the Teſtimony of a good Conſcience: for if our hearts condemn us (upon juſt grounds, and we do not bear falſe witneſs againſt our ſelves, which is the ſin of many an otherwiſe tender-hearted Chriſtian) I ſay, if our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts; but here begins our confidence towards God, if our hearts condemn us not: if we love not in word or tongue, but in deed and in truth, hereby we do (in part) know that we are of the truth, and ſhall aſſure (or as 'tis in the Margent, perſwade) our hearts before him, 1 *Joh.* 3. 18, ——21. And the Apoſtle tells us, *Rom.* 8. 16. that *the Spirit bears witneſs with our ſpirit*; as alſo it follows, 1 *Joh.* 3. 24. we may have ours without that, but not that without our own; and therefore to make up the full and compleat Teſtimony, both witneſſes (both Spirits) muſt concur and agree without contradicting or thwarting one another: The three that bear witneſs on Earth agree in one, 1 *Joh.* 5. 8. And now to the Rules for diſcerning the difference between

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the true and the pretended or presumed witness the Spirit.

The Rules are these three: 1. The witness is known from the Rule by which it speaks. 2. By the ground on which it speaks. 3. By the end to and for which it speaks. I say 'tis known,

1. By the Rule according to which it speaks: To the Law and to the Testimony, for if they speak not according to this Word, there is no light in them (*Hebr.* no morning in them) no, not so much as the dawning of the day, or the eye-lids of the morning, *Isa.* 8. 20. 1 *Joh.* 4. 1, ——— 6. and Epistle 2. 7, ——— 10. *Gal.* 1. 6, ——— 9. 2 *Cor.* 11. 1, ——— 4. The Spirit of God acts and walks by the same Rule that we are to act and walk by, and that's the *Word*. If the Word and Spirit do not agree, we must question either whether the Word be of God, or whether the Spirit be of God? and we are at a rueful loss if they do not both agree; for if the Word say one thing and the Spirit another, how shall we reconcile it? but Gods Word and Gods Spirit do alwaies agree, and are of one and the same mind. The Spirit of God did indite and dictate the holy Scriptures, and therefore it cannot say one thing there, and another in thine heart; that were to bear witness against it self: and if its Kingdom be divided how can it stand? This conclusion therefore is infallibly true, that when and wherever the Spirit of God doth bear and give its Testimony, 'tis alwaies according to the written Word, contained in the Old and New Testament:

ment: this is the foundation upon which it builds, both us and its Teſtimony, *Eph.* 2. 18,——22. The Spirit of God (as was hinted) did indite and dictate the Scripture, 2 *Pet.* 1. 20, 21. 2 *Tim.* 3. 14,——17. 1 *Joh.* 2. 20,——27. which unction refers to and is according to what they had heard from the beginning, *Verſ.* 24. ſo that they were taught the ſame thing by the unction within, as they were by the word (called unction alſo) without. In all times the Word was the Rule of tryal. Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt himſelf oppoſed and conquered the Devil by this Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. He proved himſelf to be the Meſſiah more by the Scriptures, than by Miracles; and tells them that if the Scriptures did not teſtifie of him, they ſhould not believe him, and therefore bids them *ſearch the Scriptures*, *Joh.* 5. 39. Our Saviour confutes the errors of the Phariſees and the Sadduces by Scripture. He tells us that his Spirit ſhall not bring us a new Doctrine, but make Application of what he had taught, *Joh.* 14. 26. The Apoſtles commended them of *Beræa*, that they ſearcht the Scriptures to ſee if the Apoſtles ſpake true, *Act.* 17. 10, 11. And *Peter* prefers it to the (*Bath col filia vocis*) the voice which he heard, calling it (in relation to the Jews) *a more ſure Word of Prophecie*, 2 *Pet.* 1. 16,——19. So then upon the whole 'tis clear that what is not according to the Sacred Scriptures, cannot be the witneſs of Gods Spirit.

SECT. 5.

A Continuation.

2. THE witneſs of the Spirit is known from any other by the grounds on which it witneſſeth; of which I ſhall name but two. 1. The Spirit finds this ground-work laid that thou art new-born, though but a Babe or Infant of daies and experience: this alwaies precedes the witneſs. The Spirit doth not nor can bear witneſs to them that are dead, *i. e.* that live in ſins, *Epheſ.* 1. 1, 2, 3. nor to them that have but a form of Godlineſs, or are Phariſees-hypocrites, that they are the Children of God: It cannot witneſs that to be which is not. 'Tis when and becauſe ye are Sons that *God ſends forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba Father*; and ſo thereupon or therewith *beareth witneſs* to and *with our ſpirits, that we are the Children of God*, Gal. 4. 6. with Rom. 8. 15, 16. The work is alwaies begun before the witneſs come; that which is not wrought cannot be witneſſed to: If thou therefore be not new-born, thy believing thy ſelf to be a Child of God is a deluſion, not the witneſs of the Spirit.

2. The Spirit of God bears witneſs that a man is the Child of God, not upon the ground or account of works and ſelf-righteouſneſs, but upon the ſcore of mercy and grace through the redemption which is by Chriſt Jeſus. It witneſſeth upon the account of mercy not of merit.

merit. Though there be a work wrought and working too, yet the witneſs attributes this to (and ſo witneſſeth to it) as of grace. The Sons of God are and their ſalvation is not of works but of grace, *Joh.* 1. 12, 13. *Rom.* 4. 1,—16. and 9. 15, 16. and 11. 5, 6. *Jam.* 1. 17, 18. *Tit.* 3. 4, 5. 2 *Tim.* 1. 9. by all which it doth appear, that all is of grace, and on this bottom and fondation is the witneſs laid and born to it. 'Tis called ſonſhip by Adoption (which is meerly of grace, all Adoption is ſo) and 'tis to this as ſuch, that the Spirit witneſſeth, as *Rom.* 8. 15, 16. *Gal.* 4. 6. It beareth witneſs that we are the Children of God, but ſtill that we are ſo by Adoption, and not by nature; for ſo we are Children of wrath, *Epheſ.* 2. 3. and as to works, we were Children of diſobedience, and enemies in our minds by wicked works, *Col.* 1. 21. And as to works wrought by us after the new birth, we are not the Children of God by them, for they are from our being firſt the Children of God, and that not from our worth or will, but his grace and good will: to this and to nothing but this and on this account doth the Spirit bear witneſs. And this much of the ſecond Rule, *viz.* the ground on which it witneſſeth.

3. The witneſs of the Spirit is known by the ends it aims at and attains (by affecting them) when it beareth witneſs: what they are I have declared in part before, and ſhall ſhew more hereafter, and therefore content my ſelf with but hinting a few things here. The deſign of the Spirit is the abaſing of us, and the exalting

of the Fathers and the Sons love, the Fathers grace and the Sons righteousness in our eyes; that we may be nothing, that God and Christ may be all in all: that we may admire the God of all grace & glorifie his Son Jesus for ever and for ever. The best admirations are those which spring from knowledge and assurance; ignorance is the Mother of but faint, languid & piteous devotion, but that which flows from knowledge is strong and vigorous: and therefore doth the Spirit bear witness, that our admirations, devotions and adorations may be such. 'Tis to indear God to us that we may love him the more and serve him the better; that he may be not only the dearer for his mercy, but dearer than it, and we may live to the praise and glory of God in righteousness and true holiness, in this present world, that is, all the daies of our life, yea and that to come too in Eternity. I might add, that this witness designs to wean us from this world; that we may put the scorn upon the lust of the eye and flesh and pride of life, and live above (above the grandeur and gallantry, pride and pomp, pleasures and prettinesses of this world) I say that we might live above where the way of life is to them that are wise; so wise, as to have their affections and conversations in Heaven. Thus it follows upon our Text, 1 *Joh.* 2. 15. where he bespeaks the Fathers, Young men, and little Children, *Not to love the world, neither the things that are in the world*, upon this very account that *if any man love the world, the love* (included in the knowledge) *of the Father is not in him*: he

he doth not know the Father. So that if any conceit themſelves to be Children of God, and yet admire themſelves, grow proud, wanton and worldly minded, they deceive themſelves, for they have not the witneſs of, nor this witneſs from the Spirit. Gods Children are of another world while in this, and they that know him to be their Father, live like men of another world in this, *Pſal.* 73. 25. *Phil.* 3. 20. *Heb.* 11. 13,——16. And hence there is fair way made for me to paſs on to the third part of this diſcourſe, *viz.* to ſhew more at large the reſult of this knowing the Father (or that by the witneſs of the Spirit, they are the Children of God) as to the priviledges and the injoyments of this attainment of the little Children.

CHAP. III.

Shews the priviledges and injoyments of the little Children in knowing the Father, in four Sections.

SECT. 1.

HOw upon having received the witneſs of the Spirit, they do triumph over the Law, Sin, the world and preſent enjoyments, I have declared long ſince in a little ſhort Diſcourſe in Print, called the *Triumph of Aſſurance*, being an Appendix to the firſt part of my *Orthodox Paradoxes*; to which I refer the Reader, and proceed to diſcover other the priviledges and enjoyments of theſe aſſured ones. Which priviledges muſt be more than ordinary or common, becauſe to know the Father is more than common knowledge; and the more excellent the knowledge, the more excellent the enjoyment is, whether it be in kind or but only in degree. That which I ſhall chiefly inſtance in is the great priviledge, dignity and honour of being able to cry, *Abba Father*, by the Spirit of Adoption received into and witneſſing in our ſelves: not barely Adoption, nor only the Spirit of Adoption, but by it to cry, *Abba Father*, is the great thing I ſhall inſtance in, according to *Rom.* 8. 14, 15, 16. compared with *Gal.* 4. 1, ——— 7. Now, whether

whether the Spirit of Adoption whereby we cry, *Abba Father*, be the ſame thing with the witneſs of the Spirit, whereby we know the Father, *i. e.* that we are his Children, or ſomething precedaneous to it, or ſomething ſucceeding it, and following thereupon, is a great queſtion: in ſo critical and nice a thing we need be wary and cautious. Yet with all humble ſubmiſſion I ſhall ſpeak what I think to be moſt clear and evident in this caſe; which I ſuppoſe to be this, *viz.* that the Spirit of Adoption may in part, and a little precede the witneſs of the Spirit, as the dawning of the day doth the Suns riſing to our view; withall, that more of it may come and appear together with the witneſs; but eſpecially and chiefely that moſt of all (as to exerciſe, uſe and comfort) doth flow from the witneſs after the receit thereof; that is, the Children of God who are led by the Spirit, do act moſt in and by the Spirit of Adoption crying, *Abba Father*, after they have received the witneſs of the Spirit, whereby they know the Father and that they are his Children. For the better clearing hereof, I ſhall (from comparing, *Rom.* 8. with *Gal.* 4.) lay down ſeveral gradual poſitions, all which (well conſidered) will not a little contribute to the deciding of the queſtion according to what I have already hinted.

Poſition 1. Theſe Texts (with ſeveral others) do diſcover the great advantage and digni y of the Goſpel ſtate beyond that of the Law; under the Law they were Sons and

Heirs, but under age, *i. e.* Babes, *Gal.* 4. 1. The Heir as long as he is a Babe (ſo the Word is) and *Verſ.* 3. So we, while we were Babes (ſo the word is there alſo, which we render Children) yea they were Sons by Adoption, or by grace, *Acts* 15. 11. for none have been the Sons of God any other way ſince the fall of *Adam*: But under the Law, they were under a Spirit of bondage more than of Adoption; and differed not from ſervants, *Gal.* 4. 1. were under bondage, *Verſ.* 3. and received not the Spirit of Adoption till the redemption by Chriſt was over, *Verſ.* 4, 5. and till they received the filiation or Son-ſhip by Adoption (thus manifeſted) they had not the Spirit of the Son, crying, *Abba Father*, Verſ. 6. and after this they ceaſed to be ſervants, *Verſ.* 7. that is, they ceaſed to be Sons and Heirs as Babes only, which *differeth nothing from a Servant*, Verſ. 1. and became Sons and Heirs of God through Chriſt, *Chap.* 3. from 23. to the end. The ſtate under the Law was a Law of bondage; the Law is called, *A yoke of bondage*, Gal. 5. 1. and they under it were under a ſpirit of bondage, which (in the genuine and proper ſenſe of it) is a weak, ſlaviſh and cowardly ſpirit of fear, oppoſed to that of power, love and a ſound mind, 2 *Tim.* 1. 7. This ſpirit of bondage is uſually interpreted to ſignifie a ſlaviſh frame of heart, whereby the Jews (like ſlaves and ſuperſtitious perſons) did ſerve God out of fear, and this I ſhall not deny; their religion at the beſt was called, *The fear of the Lord*: yet I ſhall add this unto it, that they

did

did ſerve God not only from fear, or out of fear, but that they were afraid and under bondage though they did ſerve God; their ſervice did not free them from fear. They were afraid of ſuffering Death and Hell, notwithſtanding their Services and Sacrifices, for Jeſus Chriſt took fleſh to free from this fear, *Heb.* 2. 14. and inſtead of it, to bring in the Spirit of Adoption, 2 *Tim.* 1. 7. *Gal.* 4. 4, 5. and ſo 'tis ſpoken of *Rom.* 8. to bear them up againſt ſufferings which they were under, as appears by *Verſ.* 15, —— 18. and accordingly 'tis mentioned to encourage *Timothy* notwithſtanding others (*Pauls*) or his own ſuffering, 2 *Tim.* 1. 7, 8. And 'tis obſervable that ſince the death of Chriſt and the pouring out of this Spirit, the Saints (many of them) have been as deſirous to die, as before (under the Law) they were (moſt of them) afraid or loth to die. Well then in the general the Goſpel ſtate is as far advanced beyond that of the Law, as liberty is beyond bondage, and courage beyond fear, as to them that have received not ſimply the Adoption but the Spirit of it.

SECT. 2.

A Continuation.

Poſition 2. THE Spirit of Adoption is an addition, a ſuperaddition to Son-ſhip; under the Law they were ſervant-ſons, but now they are Son-ſervants, they have the Spirit of Sons: ſaith the Apoſtle, *Now ye*

are

are no more Servants but Sons, viz. you that have received the Spirit of his Son, *Gal.* 4. 6, 7. They are Sons (as all Babes are) before they have this Spirit of Sons, to cry, *Abba Father.* Indeed when God is pleased to translate a Babe into an higher Form and to place him among the little Children, this Spirit of Sonship or Adoption doth begin to exert it self, before it have a clear and full witness thereof; but ordinarily as among the state of Babes, though they be Sons, yet there's little of the Spirit of Adoption, but much of bondage appears in them: so that the Spirit of Sons is an addition to Sonship; as *Gal.* 4. 5. they received the filiation and Adoption, and after that the Spirit, *Vers.* 6. and so by degrees they came to call, *Abba Father.* So *Rom.* 8. 14. they are called the Sons of God, and upon being Sons, received the Spirit of Sons or of Adoption, *Vers.* 15. they were Sons before they could call *Father*, which they could not do, but by the Spirit of Sons, or of Adoption.

Position 3. The witness of the Spirit of God comes upon (not barely the son-ship or Adoption, but) the Spirit of Adoption; for it bears witness with our Spirits, *viz.* them of Adoption: for our natural Spirit doth not bear witness that we are the Children of God, 'tis our Spirit of Adoption doth that, and with and thereunto doth the Spirit of God bear witness. The Babes are Sons, but have not the spirit of Sons, and therefore have not the witness of Gods Spirit, or assurance; but assoon as the Spirit of Sons begins to put it self forth, then usually

uſually doth the witneſs of the Spirit joyn it ſelf to it.

Poſition 4. Upon the witneſs of the Spirit (which gives aſſurance that they are the Children of God, which was doubtful before, becauſe they had only the ſingle witneſs of their own ſpirit, and yet that left them not without hope) I ſay then, doth ſuch a ſoul cry out aloud, with freedom and boldneſs, *My Father, my Father, Abba Father*: it might hope this before and faintly and brokenly indeavour to liſp out *Father* before, but now it opens its mouth wide and ſpeaks, *My Father*. 'Tis obſervable that the Spirit of Adoption *whereby we cry, Abba Father*, is called the Spirit of *his* Son, *Gal.* 4. 6. ſuch as was in Chriſt, who did (but once, *My God, my God*) alwaies pray to God with the Appellation of Father, and once, *Abba Father*, Mark 14. 36. and all theſe after he had received the witneſs of the Spirit, that he was the only and beloved Son of God, *Matth.* 3. 17. So, when we have the witneſs, we do not only think or hope that God is our Father, but with confidence and aſſurance (a Plerophorie) of Faith we draw near to God, and cry, *Abba Father*; which we cannot ſo freely do before we have the knowledge of the Father to be ours, and that we are his Children. So then the Spirit of Sons, and the witneſs of the Spirit of God therewith is (not the Babes, or Servants, but) the Childs portion (and their that are above their Form, *viz.* the Young men and Fathers) and henceforth they are taken from being Servants into the

the glorious and noble liberty of the Children and friends of God, *Rom.* 8. 19, 21. *Gal.* 4. 7. *Joh.* 15. 9.

Position 5. To have the Spirit of Adoption (and the witness of the Spirit thereunto) *whereby we cry, Abba Father,* is a choice and transcendent privilege; to have the Adoption barely, seems, I confess, to be an advance beyond their Son-ship under the Law, as 'tis *Gal.* 4. 5. As if they, though Sons, were yet Sons of another denomination and nature (*viz.* servants, or servile sons) yet to have the Spirit of Adoption, is more than Adoption; and to have the witness of the Spirit, is more than the Spirit of Adoption; for from hence is our boldness to call and cry, *Abba Father,* *'Tis the height of Gospel glory to converse with, to enjoy and obey God, as Children do a Father.* Though the Sons under the Law were under bondage, 'twas yet a state of more freedom than other Nations and people had; but this is a state of liberty, glorious liberty. 'Tis a great advance and preferment to pass from servants to friends, *Joh.* 15. 15. to pass from Babes to Children, from *as* carnal to spiritual: I, and to have not only the Spirit of Christ, without which we are none of his, *Rom.* 8. 9. but to have the peculiar Spirit of *his* Son (an Emphatical distinction!) whereby as he did, we do cry, *Abba Father*; which the other (that are Christs, and have the Spirit of Christ) cannot do without this special Spirit of *his* Son. In relation to this privilege, I shall, 1. Prove that 'tis a great and glorious one. 2. Shew wherein

wherein the glory, excellency and ſweetneſs of it is.

SECT. 3.

Proving this to be a glorious priviledge.

THat to know the Father (as I have ſpoken of it) is a great attainment and glorious priviledge, will be evident by theſe following Conſiderations, or conſiderable proofs: to begin with the Old Teſtament. 'Tis Propheſied of in the Old as the glory of the New Teſtament; The Prophecies of the time (and world to come, the Meſſiah or Goſpel diſpenſation) were glorious far beyond their preſent injoyments; and the Prophets were more *Seers*, in reſpect of what was to be, than of what was; ſo the Apoſtle tells us expreſly, *1 Pet.* 1. 10,——12. and when the day dawns and the day-ſtar ariſeth in our hearts, it ſuperſedes the Prophecis, they being then know in accompliſhments; ſo that we may ſay with a little alteration, as *Joh.* 4. 39,——42. Many believed becauſe of the Prophecies which teſtified of theſe things, but more believed becauſe of his own word; and now they may ſay, We believe not (only) becauſe of their ſayings, but becauſe we have heard (and felt him our ſelves, *1 Joh.* 1. 1,——3.) and know that this is indeed the Spirit of *his* Son, which beareth witneſs with our Spirit of Adoption. Now, among many other Prophecies of the glorys of the Goſpel-Saints, this is one, that

that they ſhould know God as a *Father*, and their Father, *Pſal.* 89. 26. (which is ſpoken of *David*, and of Chriſt who was more a *David*, than *David* was) *He ſhall cry unto me, Thou art my Father*, Iſa. 63. 16. ('tis ſpoken what they ſhould ſay in time to come) *Doubtleſs thou art our Father.* So *Chap.* 64. 8. *But now, O Lord, thou art our Father.* Jer. 3. 19. *I ſaid, How ſhall I put thee among the Children? and I ſaid, thou ſhalt call me, My Father.* Again, to know God as our Father, is (in the New-Teſtament) put as a greater glory than to know him as our God; for 2 *Cor.* 6. 16. 'tis ſaid, *I will be their God, and they ſhall be my people; but if they come out from among them, and be ſeparate and touch not the unclean thing, then I will receive them, and will be a Father to them, and they ſhall be my Sons and Daughters, ſaith the Lord God Almighty.* God is the God of Angels, but to which of them ſaid he at any time? *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*; and again, *I will be to him a Father, and he ſhall be to me a Son.* The Apoſtles add this Title to that of God, 2 *Cor.* 11. 31. *Epheſ.* 1. 3. 1 *Pet.* 1. 3. *The God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*: from whence 'tis apparent that 'tis fuller of ſweetneſs that God is *Our Father*, than if he were only our God.

The great (if not the greateſt) diſcovery which Chriſt promiſed to make (by ſending the Spirit to do it) was to make known the Father. They had heard him ſpeak much of the Father and of knowing the Father, *Joh.* 14. 1,——7. whereupon ſaith *Philip, Shew us*

the

the Father and it ſuffiseth us, Verſ. 8. from whence our Saviour takes an occaſion to ſpeak more at large of the union that was between him and the Father, and that in knowing him they might know the Father alſo, and that whoever loves him ſhall be loved of the Father, and that the Father would ſend the Holy Ghoſt to be the Comforter, under which name he had not yet been (at leaſt not ſo clearly and fully) known; and that therefore they ſhould rejoyce becauſe he went to the Father; with many other ſuch like ſweet things in that Chapter. And *Chap.* 16. 25. *The time cometh* (viz. when the Comforter cometh) *that I will ſhew you plainly of the Father*, and in *Verſ.* 26, 27. places more comfort in it than in his own interceſſion for us, which yet is one of the greateſt comforts we have, as may be ſeen in *Rom.* 8. 34. *Heb.* 7. 25. 1 *Joh.* 2. 1. Accordingly the good news which he ſent his Diſciples after his Reſurrection was this, that he was aſcending to his God and their God; and not only ſo, but to his Father and their Father, *Joh.* 20. 17. To have the witneſs of the Spirit, and ſo to know the Father, is ſuch another honour as was confer'd on Chriſt himſelf; as the Spirit is the Spirit of his Son, ſo the glory is the glory of his Son, *viz.* ſuch as he had, *Matth.* 3. 17. and 17. 5. which voice and teſtimony is called a receiving honour and glory from God the Father, 2 *Pet.* 1. 17. And when the like Teſtimony is born by the Spirit of God to our ſpirits, we receive honour and glory from God the Father: For if it be ſo great an honour

nour to be known of God, how much is it to know him, and to know him as our Father, *Gal.*4.9. 1 *Cor.*13.11,12. *Phil.*3.12. By all these things it appears that it is a great, glorious and sweet priviledge to know the Father by the witness of his Spirit.

SECT. 4.

Shews wherein the glory and sweetness of this priviledge consists.

THE second thing I am obliged to discover and to treat of is, the glory and excellency of this privilédge that the little Children can cry, *Abba Father.* And it lies much in two things,

1. That they have a great deal of freedom, boldness and assurance in their addresses to God and appearings before him at the Throne of Grace, and in the day of Judgement. That they have at the throne of Grace, is express upon the account of their Intercessor and High-Priest, *Heb.* 4. 14,——16. And indeed the Spirit becomes a Spirit of Prayer (an Intercessor) in them, as it follows, *Rom.* 8. 26, 27. The Spirits knowledge is more to their advantage and comfort, than their ignorance is to their detriment. They go to God as to a Father, as Children use to do to their Fathers, but with a *much more* assurance, *Matth.* 7. 11. as the Prayers of Christ are heard alwaies, *Joh.* 11. 41, 42. and by his Prayers he can obtain and do

do mighty things, *Matth.* 26. 53. becauſe they are addreſt to his Father; ſo 'tis alſo with theſe that know the Father, 1 *Joh.* 3. 21, 22. and 5. 14, 15. God alwaies had his favorites, who had his ear and heart and hand (to command almoſt) for his Sons and Daughters, ſuch were *Noah*, *Daniel* and *Job*, *Moſes*, *Joſhuah* and *Samuel*, *Abraham*, *Jacob*, &c. And now theſe little Children (the *Johns* that lie in his boſom, *Joh.* 13. 21,——26.) are ſuch as they, *viz.* great prevailers with and obtainers from the Lord, as our Saviour tells them and us, *Joh.* 14. 12, 13. *Joh.* 15. 7. and 16. 23, 24. all which places and promiſes refer to what they ſhould ask and receive and do after he was aſcended, and had ſent the Spirit to make known the Father to them. As they have great boldneſs at the throne of Grace, ſo in the day of Judgement alſo; for perfect love (a Plerophorie or full aſſurance) hath boldneſs in the day of Judgement, becauſe as he is, ſo theſe are in this world (*viz.* he is declared and witneſſed to be the Son, and theſe are to be the Sons of God) 1 *Joh.* 4. 17. they ſhall have confidence at his coming, 1 *Joh.* 2. 28.

2. The advantage of knowing the Father and being able to cry, *Abba Father*, is much in this, that 'tis a great relief to them in the ſaddeſt times and conditions: 'Twas Chriſts ſtanding conſolation that God was his Father, and ſo 'tis theirs. It's ſufficient to now the Father, who is all-ſufficient, and whoſe grace ſhall be ſufficient for them, come what will or can. This is great and ſtrong conſolation,

1. In case we are mis-judged and mis-interpreted; thus it was to Christ himself, *Joh.* 8. 15,——19. and *Vers.* 47,— 55. What ever you think or say it matters not, My Father witnesseth to me, and my Father honoureth me, &c. 'Twas *Paul*'s comfort that *The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ* (and in him our Father) knew that he did not lie, though they were too apt to think that he did, 2 *Cor.* 11. 31. 'Tis a small thing to be mis-judged in mans day, when our Father will be our Judge, and judge righteously, 1 *Pet.* 2. 23.

2. 'Tis great and strong consolation when we fear wants; we are but too prone to be solicitous for to morrow, and therefore to pour out many and long Prayers to God; but to take us off from vain Repetitions, Tautologies, much speaking and solicitous thoughts, our Saviour propounds the remedies for our hearts ease from God to be known as a Father. *Matth.* 6. 7, 8, 9. And therefore bids them pray briefly and pithily, and to address and make applications to God as a Father, who knows better what they need, and what's fit for them, than they do. So as to cares also, *Vers.* 26. and 32.

3. When forsaken and forgotten by friends and nearest relations. Though Father and Mother forget us, yet will not God our Father, and therefore the Church pleads it, *Isa.* 63. 16. *Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou, O Lord, art our Father.* This supported Christ himself when the Disciples fled and left

him

him alone, yet he was not alone for his Father was with him, *Joh.* 16. 32.

4. In case of suffering not only from men but from God himself to know the Father ingageth to patience and submission, which is never without ease and comfort. When a person was lanced and cut by a Chirurgion her Father, and askt by one how she could endure it? Oh, said she, 'tis my Father and he loves me. Thus our Saviour took the cup because his Father gave it him to drink, *Joh.* 18. 11. And the Apostle presseth to indure chastening upon this account, *Heb.* 12. 5,—10.

5. Yea in the time of desertion, Death and Judgement, this is a cordial notwithstanding: if it were enough to a Child of light, that walked in darkness and saw no light, to have this staff to lean on that God was his God, *Isa.* 50. 10. much more (as was hinted) that God is his Father, as 'tis *Isa.* 64. 7, 8. *Thou hid thy face from us*, &c. *but yet, O Lord, thou art our Father.* When our Lord Jesus cry'd out, *My God, my God why hast thou forsaken me*; yet presently he concludes in almost the same breath (which was also his last) *Father into thine hands I commend my Spirit*, Luk. 23. 46. yea as I newly said, this casts out fear in the day of Judgement.

6. 'Tis great comfort that we know the Father and are known of him, when no man knows the good we do, it being done in secret, *Matth.* 6. 4, and 6. yea though we forget the good we have done, yet our Father will remember it and bless us for it, *Matth.* 25.

Come ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, who fed me, cloath'd me, &c. O Lord, ſay they, when did we do this? Though they had forgotten, yet the Father had a Book of remembrance written for them that loved his name, and ſhewed it in miniſtring to the Saints, *Heb.* 6. 9, 10.

7. 'Tis a great comfort when we are ſtraitened in Prayer, and cannot expreſs nor utter our own conditions, yet that our Father knows and concerns himſelf for all our affairs, *Matth.* 6. 7, 8, 9. with *Rom.* 8. 26, 27. which is ſpoken as referring to them that had the Spirit of Adoption, *Verſ.* 15. The Spirit that witneſſeth is aſſiſtant to ſuch in Prayer, and commends their thoughts, ſighs and groans to God, for he (ſaith the Text) ſearcheth the hearts.

8. 'Tis a great comfort though at any time we have not ſome particular things that we pray for: our heavenly Father will not withhold any good thing; if he withhold any, that thing is not good for us; if it were (*pro hic & nunc, rebus ſic ſtantibus*) good, and good now, we ſhould have it preſently, for no earthly Father can be ſo ready as our heavenly Father is to give good things, even the Spirit to them that ask (aright, and according to his Will, *Matth.* 7. 11. with *Luke* 11. 13.) they have all that they may ask, would or ſhould ask, as that may be read, 1 *Joh.* 3. 22. and that is what's according to his Will, 1 *Joh.* 5. 14. And beſide this a Child of God would neither have nor ask any thing knowingly. They are ſure to have all that's good (and 'tis beſt to be without

out what is not so) yea that which is denyed, their disappointment of it and his denial, (the evil they undergo as well as the good they do) the good they are without as well as that which they enjoy shall all work together for their good who love God, and that (to be sure) they do (and dearly too) who know the Father, and have assurance of his love.

'Tis time now to dismiss this third Chapter, having shewn in it the priviledges and injoyments (as far as I intended) of the little Children, who know the Father, and what sweetness and honey drops from this rock of ages the everlasting Father: I now proceed to the fourth particular, which is to discover the frame of the heart and conversation of the life of these little Children, who know the Father.

CHAP. IV.

Shewing the frame and converſation of theſe little Children, who know the Father: in two Sections.

THis ſtate or Claſſis of Saints being not ſo much noted particularly as that of Babes is, I ſhall not be able to bring many inſtances of particular perſons; yet conſidering the nature of their attainment, by rules of proportion and degrees of grace, and what the ſacred Writ ſays in general, I ſhall endeavour to clear up theſe things, as an addition to ſeveral others hinted before.

SECT. 1.

1. THat theſe little Children (who know the Father by intereſt and experience) are of a very loving (which is a very lovely) diſpoſition and frame, and conſequently are of a very ingenuous, affable and obliging, yea of a winning converſation, *Cos & magnes amoris amor*, Love is the whetſtone and loadſtone of love; they therefore being beloved of the Father, and this Love being made known and aſſured to them, they cannot but moſt inwardly and expreſſively, moſt dearly and ſignificantly love and ſhew their love to their Father and to their Brethren, 1 *Joh.* 4. 19 20 21.

Love

Love begets Love, and the manifeſtation of Love begets the manifeſtation of Love. Seeing they lie in his boſom, under the influences of his ſmiles and kiſſes, they cannot but be enamoured and inflamed with Love. The Love of God ſhed abroad in their hearts, cauſeth their Love to be ſhed and ſpread abroad toward him and his, as 1 *Joh.* 4. 8, — 19, — 21. Their love is ſecond to his firſt Love, and bears a kind of proportion to it, as may be ſeen

1. In this, the many pretty, innocent and harmleſs fondneſſes (as I may call them) which they expreſs in their Love-fits: they do many things which would not ſeem ſo decent and becoming, but that Love not only excuſeth but warrants them, yea ſets a gloſs and beauty upon them. *Mary* and *Martha* were two of his ſpecial favourites, *Joh.* 11. 5. This *Mary* eſpecially as ſhe was loved ſo ſhe loved much, *Luk.* 7. 47. and in the zeal and Ecſtaſie of her love (being rapt and tranſported with it) ſhe anointed the Lord with ointment, and not only waſht his feet with her tears, but kiſt them with her lips and wiped them with her hair, *Joh.* 11. 2. compared with *Luke* 7. 37, — 47. at which though others murmured, yet Chriſt commends both it and her for it, and withal upbraids *Simon* for falling ſhort, hugely ſhort of her, though he made him a feaſt.

2. Their Love appears in this that no danger will fright them from him whom they love: when the other Diſciples fled, yet *John* (the Diſciple whom Jeſus loved) was found (and obſerved by Chriſt himſelf) ſtanding by

the Croſs, *Joh.* 20. 26. But to inſtance in *Mary Magdalene* eſpecially, Oh how is ſhe carried beyond, above and out of her ſelf by love to Jeſus who loved her firſt! the ſtory is in *John*, *Chap.* 19. 25. ſhe ſtood by the Croſs, and was not affrighted away by the Troops of Souldiers, rude and unruly though they were, *Joh.* 20. 1. when others were doubting, ſhe hies to the Sepulchre early, and (as 'tis remarked there) while it was yet dark, this did not fright her, being made bold by love though ſhe were of the weaker, and more fearful Sex: and went not empty handed, but carried ſweet ſpices, *Mark* 16. 1. ſhe ran to tell *Peter* and *John* how 'twas, *Joh.* 20. 2. which when they had ſeen they returned, but ſhe ſtaid weeping, and as ſhe wept ſhe ſtoopt down, and as ſhe ſtoopt down ſhe lookt, *Verſ.* 11. buſie love! and when the Angels askt her why ſhe wept? Alas, ſaid ſhe, do you ask me what I ail (as he in *Judg.* 18. 23, 24.) they have taken away my dear, dear Lord, and I know not where they have laid him: though he be as one that is not, yet I cannot but love him! And love at that time was ſo much a paſſion that ſhe knew not her Lord, though ſhe ſaw and heard him, but thought it had been the Gardener. But when Jeſus called her by her name, oh how is ſhe tranſported! *Rabboni, oh my Lord?* is this ſo? am I not in a dream? *Rabboni!* and it ſeems ſhe would have embraced him, but that love knows how to obey as well as to enjoy, and therefore being commanded away, away ſhe goes. And this brings me to a

3. Diſ-

3. Diſcovery of their love, which is in keeping his Commandments, and that without regret or grief, according to 1 *Joh.* 5. 1,—3. Love is ſuch a thing as deſires not only to be be oved, but to be commanded; it hath ſo great a right and inclination too, as well as obligation to do good and well, that it thinks it ſelf either wrong'd or ſuſpected if it be not put upon the moſt high and difficult ſervices: love never ſaies, *This is an hard ſaying, who can bear it*, love never repines; neither doing nor ſuffering is grievous to it. Therefore 'tis noteworthy that when our Saviour was about to tell *Peter* what he muſt do and ſuffer, he doth in the firſt place make ſure of his love, *Joh.* 21. 15,-19. When the Father gives out commands, *amor addidit alas* love wings the ſoul that it flies to obedience with ſpeed and pleaſure. Love hath an ambition to pleaſe to the utmoſt, 2 *Cor.* 5. 9. with 14. to do ſomething worthy of the Fathers love, 1 *Theſ.* 2. 11, 12. therefore the Apoſtle having prayed that they might know the unparallel'd love of God and Chriſt, ſuch as paſſeth knowledge, *i. e.* there was never the like known, *Epheſ.* 3. 18, 19. he preſently exhorts them to walk worthy of their vocation, *Epheſ.* 4. 1.

SECT.

SECT. 2.

A Continuation.

2. LIttle Children are modeſt and humble, they ſeek not after greatneſs nor great things in this world, for they are weaned, *Pſal.* 131. 1, 2. being wean'd and paſt the ſtate of a Babe and ſuckling, they are not concern'd to catch after and graſp at things which are not ſuteable to their ſtate. The Diſciples while but Babes were often querying who ſhould be greateſt? but our Saviour called a *little Child* unto him and ſet him in the midſt of them, and ſaid, *Verily, I ſay unto you, unleſs ye be converted, and become as little Children, ye ſhall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven* (i. e. you ſhall have no abundant entrance, as 2 *Pet.* 2. 11. and ſo the ſubſequent Verſe expounds it) *Whoſoever therefore ſhall humble himſelf as this little Child* (the emblem of Gods little Children) *the ſame is* (one of the) *greateſt in the Kingdom of Heaven*, Matth. 1. 1, ——— 4. They were converted before, but they needed to be converted from this being *as carnal* and but Babes: Converſion is continued and advanced in growth (not only as to degrees in the ſame ſtate, but) in paſſing from one Claſſis to another, as from being Babes to little Children; for till we are thus converted we are not wean'd from being *as carnal*, nor can we ſtrengthen our Brethren, as Chriſt ſpake to *Peter* to do.

3. The

3. The little Children are full of bowels and compaſſion, very tender-hearted; God as a Father is ſo, and in being ſo we are his Children, *Mat.* 5. 44,—48. *Eph.* 5. 1. *Col.* 3. 12. And this is pure Religion before God as a Father, *Jam.* 1. 27. 'Twas upon this account that our Saviour committed his bleſſed Mother to the beloved Diſciple *John*, who of all was moſt like to be tender of her, *Joh.* 19. 27. Yet again, they are very tender-hearted in this reſpect, that if at any time they do any thing which grieves their Father, or the Spirit by which they are ſealed to the day of redemption, their heart ſmites them and they are more angry with themſelves than their Father is, for they will not forgive themſelves, though he forgive them. Though God had told *David* (the beloved one, and the weak Babes are not yet as *David*) *That his ſin was forgiven*, yet he repents and abhors himſelf in duſt and aſhes, as *Job* alſo did, *Chap.* 42. 5, 6.

4. Children are full of imitation, they tread in their Fathers ſteps (as *Aſcanius* did in *Æneas*'s; *ſequitur* (*licet*) *non paſſibus æquis*) they make the Father their example and to walk as they have him for an example, 1 *Pet.* 1. 14,--17. *Epheſ.* 5. 1. And in fine, Children are very teachable: the Babe is not ſo. Teach a Child the trade of his way, the Child-ſtate is a learning ſtate: the Babes are dull of hearing, *Heb.* 5. 11. 2 *Cor.* 3. 2. *Joh.* 16. 12. Great things cannot be taught to Babes, *Iſa.* 28. 9. *But hear ye Children*, Prov. 4. 1. *and come near my Children, I will teach you*, Pſal. 34. 11.

Theſe

These are capable of strong meat, for they are spiritual, having received the Spirit of Adoption, and the witness of that Spirit by which they bring forth all the fruits of the Spirit, *Gal.* 5. 22,—26. These few things shall suffice concerning the disposition and conversation of these little Children, by which we may see what Doctrine is most proper to be Preacht unto them (*non omnibus omnia*) as belonging to their state. I should now come to apply the whole, but that there is one Question which will require an Answer to it before I shew the uses of this Point.

The Question is, *Whether those that have assurance do alwaies, to their dying day, lie in the injoyment and powerful influences of this assurance? may not this Sun be Eclipsed? May not this Child of light walk in darkness, after the light and sight of God as a Father? May not the witness of the Spirit be suspended and withdrawn?*

I Answer, 1. Some of them may and do live in a continual injoyment of their assurance, as 1 *Joh.* 5. 18, 19, 20. especially if they be grown up to be Fathers (after they have been Young-men conquerors) for the Fathers are spoken of as persons, who have without interruption, known him, that is, from the beginning; and these little Children (such as are to be kept in this state) may also (as *John* did) lie in the bosom to the very last: but if any of them be (and many of them are) design'd to be young men, then indeed they are tempted to call their Son ship into question,

but

but by the word and witneſs abiding in them (like *Joſephs* bow in ſtrength) they overcome and conquer, as Chriſt Jeſus did; which will appear in treating of the next degree or Claſſis, *viz.* that of the Young-men.

2. As to the influence of aſſurance in reſpect of joy, rapture, tranſport and the like, I humbly conceive that it doth not abide with any in ſo high a degree and great a meaſure as when it came at firſt: my reaſon is this, their Spirit would fail, for the viſion is too ſtrong, and the light too glaring and bright to be born alwaies or long as it ſhined at firſt, and may now and then at ſome certain ſeaſons afterward; beſide if it ſhould continue long, as it ſeiz'd them at firſt and for awhile, they would be unfit for any of theſe lower offices and affairs of their particular calling, wherein they are to ſerve the Will of God in their generations; for this would ſo poſſeſs and take them up (as the Prophets of old were during the time of their Viſions) that they could not attend any thing elſe. As when wrath is upon any, the Spirit would fail if God ſhould ſo contend for ever, as 'tis in *Iſa.* 57. 16,—18. So indeed if God ſhould continue the bright ſhine of glory alwaies, as 'tis when the aſſurance comes at firſt, they would faint under ſo great a weight of Glory, and beg God to forbear a little, leſt their ſpirit ſhould fail. Now as wrath due to ſin is not alwaies apprehended as at the firſt conviction, ſo neither may love be; and yet the influence of this Sun may operate much when the Clouds interpoſe: and accordingly the little Children (during

their

their abode in that ſtate) have a ſedate peace and calm ſerenity poſſeſt by them for the moſt part, and ſo can go on cheerfully to ſerve their God and Father, and to accept of and be pleaſed with his Will in all conditions.

3. They having received the witneſs of the Spirit, this Spirit never witneſſeth againſt them to deny or contradict the former witneſs: it never revokes it, though it ſhould ſuſpend it; nor reverſeth it, though it ſhould witneſs better things againſt them. For though it never do ſay to ſuch a ſoul, Thou art a Child of wrath, yet poſſibly in a time of deſertion and darkneſs it may ſay, Thou art under wrath; and ſo ſet home very terrible things to the great affliction and deep humbling of the Soul. And thus at length have I diſpatcht not all that I might, but all that I deſigned to ſpeak as to the doctrinal part of this diſcourſe about the little Childrens (attaintment, injoyment, diſpoſition and converſation, as 'tis in and from) knowing the Father, *viz.* as their Father. I ſhall now conclude it with ſome Application.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

The Application, in two Sections.

SECT. I.

An Exhortation to Babes.

MY Exhortation is first to the Babes, that they would be much in Prayer unto God for this attainment, that he would place them among the Children, and give them the Spirit of Adoption, and the witness of his Spirit therewith, that they may know the Father to be their Father, and themselves to be the Children of God, and so cry, *Abba Father*. Beg and beg again that he would fall on your neck and kiss you with the kisses of his mouth, which are better than Wine, yea and Corn and Oyl too, *Cant.* 1. 2. *Psal.* 4. 6, 7. For your help herein I present you with a Directory, not to be read by roat, but as a supply of Arguments which you may breath and sigh out before the Lord (though not in these very words, but) as the Spirit shall help you.

In the first place be sure to bless God for what thou hast received, *Do not despise the day of small things*, nor think any of his consolations little, seeing thou art less than the least of all: bless him that he hath proclaimed his name

name (*The Lord gracious*) and that thou haſt had a taſte thereof; that there is ſuch a ſaying (faithful and worthy of acceptance) *that Jeſus Chriſt came into the world to ſave ſinners*; that thou haſt taken in the milk of this Goſpel (the firſt principles of the doctrine of Chriſt) *Repentance from dead works, and Faith towards God and Chriſt*; that thou are taken into the Family though thou have but little of the Childrens bread, but art fed with crumbs: The beſt way to be bleſt with more is to bleſs God for what we have; *To him that hath* (been thankful) *ſhall be given, and he ſhall have more abundantly.* Yea, bleſs him and tell him thou wilt do it for ever, though he ſhould never do more forthee than he hath done: ſeeing he hath convinced thee of the ſinfulneſs of ſin, of the excellency of a ſtate of Grace, and given thee deſires to grow, & (as thou art told) hath *made with thee an everlaſting Covenant* (well ordered in all things and ſure) thou wilt bleſs him for it as for thy Salvation, though thy houſe be not ſo with God as thou couldſt wiſh it, and though he make it not to grow. Yet humbly tell him withal that this is not all thy deſire, but thou haſt a requeſt to make with this thy thankſgiving, and 'tis that he would place thee among the children that thou maiſt cry, *Abba Father*, for the taſte thou haſt had of his grace, hath ſet thy ſoul a longing (as it did the Spouſe, *Cant.* 1. 1,—3.) after the good fruit and growth of the Land: and that thou hopeſt, ſeeing he did find thee when thou ſoughteſt him not, that he will make himſelf known to thee (as a Father)

Father) now thou enquireſt after him. Tell him that 'tis a deſire of his own begetting, and beg him that it may not be diſappointed or denied by him. who hath ſtiled himſelf, *A God hearing Prayers*, which is the great incouragement that all fleſh hath to come unto him: Say, O Lord, thou hadſt wont not only to bring to the birth, but to bring forth and then to bring up, and wilt not thou (who art the ſame to day as yeſterday) be merciful as thou art wont to them that love thy name, which Lord, my dear Lord, thou knoweſt I do. Urge it yet again that thou comeſt not (to ſay as many, *Who will ſhew us any good?*) for Corn and Wine and Oyl, but for the light of his countenance, and his loving kindneſs, which is to thee better than life.

If yet he anſwer not, go on and confeſs that thou art unworthy of ſo great a favour (then the Father kiſt the Prodigal) yet that thou prayeſt him to remember that all others were ſo; and if he pleaſe to do for thee (as he hath for ſome others) that thou wilt give him (as they do) the glory of his grace, and ſay,

'Tis not my merit, no deſert of mine,
'Tis only thy pure Love hath made me thine.

Though it be a favour too great for thee to beg, yet not for him to give, who is the God of all grace, and hath promiſed, *That if we confeſs our ſin, he is juſt and faithful to forgive us our ſin:* They ſpeed beſt, who confeſs their unworthineſs and ill deſerving, as the Prodigal

and others did. If yet he ſmile not upon thee, tell him that 'tis really a great grief of heart to thee to ſee at what a poor, low and inconſiderable a rate thou liveſt, and how at moſt unſerviceable thou art to his glory, and that thou wouldſt gladly do him better ſervice: that thou haſt heard of what an ingenuous and dutiful diſpoſition, and how fruittul the little Children are, and that upon this very account thou longeſt to be one of the number, yea though thou ſhouldeſt not be acquainted with the joyes and raptures that they are. Tell him that thou comeſt not meerly to have more pleaſure for thy ſelf, but to pleaſe him more, yea that thou maiſt walk worthy of him to all well-pleaſing. Tell him that the Lord Jeſus ſaid, He had more of the Fathers heart-love to diſplay, which ſhould be done by the Spirit, and that he ſhould enable them to bear theſe diſcoveries who afore-time could not do it; and that if he pleaſe he can advance and prefer thee to this honour alſo; Oh Lord ſtrengthen me and perfect that which concerns thy Servant! If yet he make not himſelf known, tell him farther, That Jeſus Chriſt promiſed that whatever (of this nature and concern) thou among others ſhould ask in his name, that it ſhould be done, and pray him to remember his own Son and Promiſe (ſurely he will be as good as his Word, who is faithful and cannot deny himſelf!) Is there not a much more put on the heavenly Father, the Father of Spirits, as to giving good things, yea his holy Spirit to them that ask it? Add hereunto, that thou art ſick of

Love,

Love, and ſo ſick that if he do not ſhine on thee 'twill coſt thee thy life; and will he ſee thee die in a love-fit! He whom thou loveſt is ſick, and he who loves thee is ſick, are the two obliging arguments, and though thou canſt not ſay the former, yet thou canſt the latter, and therefore pray him (who is Love) to have compaſſion on thee in this thy ſickneſs, ſeeing Love hath made thee ſo: The Spouſe had no ſooner pleaded this, but he embraced her, his left hand was under her head, and his right hand over her heart, ſhe was emboſomed between the arms of Love, *Cant.* 2. 5, 6. Oh dear Lord, let it be ſo with me!

If yet he ſeem not to regard thee, tell him then that if he perſiſt in denying thee, it may prove a great temptation and ſnare to thee to turn aſide to the flocks of his companions; Ah Lord, Satan and Fleſh and Blood have often blurted out ſuch things as theſe, Why wilt thou wait on one who cares not for thee, nor will provide thee bread, no nor give thee a good word or look; but this, O Lord, goes to my heart as a ſword, that they ſhould ſay, *Where is thy God*! Oh, *Lead me not into temptation*, but give me one kiſs at leaſt, that I may tell Satan from experience, 'tis good, oh how good 'tis! to draw near to and to wait on God, and that I ſeek not his face in vain. Go on and tell him that thou art reſolved thou wilt never give him over, but wilt cleave to him with full purpoſe of heart: that he ſhall have an importunate Suiter of thee, and that thou wilt give him no reſt; but wilt continual-

ly purſue him (and beg others alſo to do as much for thee) till he eſtabliſh thee a praiſe in the earth, by ſaying, Is he not my dear Son? a pleaſant Child? I will ſurely have mercy upon him, ſaith the Lord. Tell him, though he lame thee (as he did *Jacob*) yet thou wilt not let him go till he bleſs thee and give thee a new name; yea though he call thee Dog and beat thee with frowns and hard expreſſions, yet that thou wilt love him and lie at his feet, for all that.

If he begin to ſpeak, though it be againſt thee (as he did to *Ephraim* and the woman of *Canaan*) yet take hold of what he ſaies, and plead it, for 'twill be to thine advantage at laſt, as 'twas to theirs. If he tell thee that thou art not yet in a capacity, anſwer him humbly, that never any was till he was pleaſed to make them ſo, and that thou comeſt to pray him that he will capacitate and make thee meet. If he tell thee, thou wilt be wanton and abuſe it, by being puffed up, *&c.* tell him that he can prevent it by his grace; 'tis true, thy heart (alas!) is deceitful, but thou doſt not intend any ſuch thing, but doſt hope that if he will give thee this Pearl, it ſhall not be caſt to a Swine that will trample upon it, nor to a Dog that will turn again and rend it; and doſt alſo pray him that thou maiſt never receive this grace and favour in vain, or turn it into wantonneſs, or ſin becauſe his grace abounds. If he tell thee the time is not yet come, reply to him, that thou wilt wait his pleaſure, and not awake him till he pleaſe, but wait all thy daies, if at laſt

laſt this change may come; oh that this happy change may come! Conclude by telling him, that if thou have been bold, 'tis in the name of the great High-Prieſt, who ſits at his own right hand and is toucht with the feeling of thy infirmities, by whom thou haſt been emboldened to come with thy Petitions, and preſent them to the throne of his Grace, that thou mighteſt obtain this mercy and grace for thy opportune and ſeaſonable relief: and therefore though thou canſt not call him thy *Father*, yet thou canſt call upon him as the *Father* of Jeſus Chriſt, who heareth him alwaies. Yea at an adventure ſpeak to him and call (though thou canſt not cry aloud and confidently) yet call him Father; and tell him, Oh my dear Lord look upon me, and ſee if this be not thy Sons Coat: Though I am as carnal, yet thine Apoſtle calls me (not carnal, but) a Babe in Chriſt; and I am told by them who think better of me than I dare do of my ſelf, that they do ſpie thine image in mine eye; which makes me the more inclinable to ſay, *Father*, look upon me and ſee if there be not ſomething of the ſpirit of a Son in me. Oh therefore ſend thy good Spirit the Comforter to witneſs with this ſpirit that I am thy Child: dear God and Father do this for thy poor Babe!

Thus plead with God, and who knows but he may be gracious to thee? delight thy ſelf in him and he will give thee thy hearts deſire, commit thy ſelf and way to him, and he will bring it to paſs, yea he ſhall bring forth thy righteouſneſs as the light, and thy judgement

as the noon day, unto victory; he will not quench the ſmoaking Flax, nor break the bruiſed Reed; but as he hath done to them that have thus pleaded with and ſubmitted to him, ſo (I believe) he will do for thee; he will revive the heart of the humble, and they ſhall live: yea, it may be thou ſhalt (within a little time) hear the joyful ſound of, *Son be of good chear, thy ſins are forgiven thee*, thou art a pleaſant Child, be it unto thee as thou wilt; thou ſhalt no more ſit trembling at the door of hope, but have an abundant entrance into the Family, and be placed among the Children, to eat of their bread and to drink of their Wine, to injoy the fruit of righteouſneſs, which is peace and aſſurance for ever, *Amen*.

SECT. 2.

An Exhortation to the little Children in ſeveral particulars.

THE next branch of Exhortation is to them that know the Father, who by the witneſs of the Spirit are aſſured that they are the Children of God; I exhort you Brethren, 1. That you be not wanton, through this abundance of Revelation to be proud and puffed up: you muſt expect to be ſet upon by Satan, as Chriſt was, when he had received the witneſs of the Spirit that he was the Son of God, *Matth.* 3. 16 17. with *Chap.* 4. 1. When *Paul* was advanced to Paradiſe, and inclinable thereupon to be puffed up, a meſſenger of Satan was

ſent

ſent to buffet him, 2 *Cor.* 12. 7. buffettings attend this ſtate, but eſpecially if there be puffings up, therefore beware. High fortunes (as the world ſpeaks) are the way to high minds; but high minds and mountainous Spirits are more liable to tempeſts and ſtorms from Satans wind and weather, than the humble Valleys: they are moſt like to be brought down, who are liſted up. Indeed God is very gracious in giving the witneſs of his Spirit, and ſo manifeſting himſelf as a Father, before the Tempter comes, before we are to enter the field and fight with the Devil (in this caſe, about our Sonſhip) that we may be the better armed and able to defend our ſelves, yet the Devil takes (and our hearts too often give him) occaſion to take this opportunity to tempt us. Beware and take heed that you be not lifted up by this advancement.

2. Now you know the Father and his everlaſting Love towards you, take heed you do not neglect the Son of his Love and the righteouſneſs which is by him; God expects that you honour the Son as you do the Father, *Joh.* 5. 23. for you are not juſtified by the Fathers Grace and Love, but in conjunction with and through the redemption that is by Jeſus Chriſt, *Rom.* 3. 24. the Father indeed choſe you, and he bleſſeth you with all ſpiritual bleſſings, but ſtill 'tis in Chriſt Jeſus, *Epheſ.* 1. 2,—5. The everlaſting Conſolation is from not only the Father but the Son alſo, who hath loved you, 2 *Theſ.* 2. 16. be ſure therefore that you do not ſo eye the love of the Father, as

to look off from the Son, who is joyntly ingaged with the Father, in all the transactions of their happiness. When the Butler was advanced he forgat *Joseph* (to which that seems to be an allusion, *Amos 6. 6.*) so some are apt to do by Jesus Christ, though 'twere by him they came to all their honour, if at least come they be as they pretend.

3. Grieve not the holy Spirit of God whereby you are sealed to the day of redemption, *Ephes.* 4. 30. If you be not kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, ye do not only forget God and Christ, for whose sake God forgave you, but you grieve the Spirit, who brought you this good news; for all these are connected, together with *Vers.* 30. and so is that also, *Vers.* 29. if you do not edifie one another, and in your communications minister Grace to them that hear you. If God should (as it were) call back the witness of his Spirit and leave thee to walk in darkness, in what a woe-state wouldst thou be; 'twill in some respects be far worse with thee than 'twas before, when thou wert but a Babe. Oh then grieve not the Spirit, nor give God an occasion to put thee under a state of desertion.

4. Honour your Father; 'tis the sin of some that they glorifie not God as God, and it may be your sin not to glorifie God as a Father and as your Father, *Mal.* 1. 6. A Son honoureth his Father; not only as a man, or a man above him, but as his Father. The Father pitieth the Son that serves him, and the Son should honor & serve the Father that pities him. Because Christ Jesus

ſus was) alwaies about your Fathers buſineſs, and bring forth much fruit whereby his and your Father may be glorified. Fill up the converſation of Children, live like Children: be loving, be humble, be tender-hearted, be teachable and imitate your Father, to be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect. The more you abound in theſe things, the more communion and joy will be your portion; you will know the dignity and enjoyment of Aſſurance, and what it is to call upon and live with God as a Father; of which I have ſpoken and need not to repeat and tell you how it will carry you above cares and fears; what a cordial it will be in time of ſuffering, Death and Judgement.

5. And laſtly, Let the Word of God dwell richly in you in all wiſdom, that if the Lord call you forth to fight his Battels (as he doth ſome of your Claſſis, to be Young men) you may be ſtrong and overcome the wicked one, by the Word of God abiding in you. Perhaps ſuch laplings as you, are loth to leave the Cloſet and go into the Field, and I cannot altogether blame you; yet if God call you forth to undergo tryals, and be tempted, remember that Loves commands (them from and to Love) are not grievous; and therefore you need to hide the Word in the heart and to ſpend ſome time (as our Saviour did) in Faſting and Prayer, leſt and before you enter into the Battle: and not entangle your ſelves with the affairs of this Life, that

you

you may please him, who shall chuse you to be Souldiers, and endure hardship as the good Souldiers of Jesus Christ, 2 *Tim.* 2. 3, 4. But of this more hereafter in handling the next rank of Saints, *viz.* Young men, and their Glory, which is strength. And this shall suffice to have been spoken of the Attainment, injoyments, dispositions and conversations of Little Children who know the Father, *i. e.* who have assurance of the Fathers Love, and live in union and communion with him.

The End of the Second Classis.

The

The THIRD CLASSIS IN THE School of CHRIST, Viz. YOUNG MEN.

From 1 *John* 2. 13, 14.

Verſ. 13. *I write to you Young men, becauſe ye have overcome the wicked one.*

Verſ. 14. *I have written unto you Young men, becauſe ye are ſtrong, and the Word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.*

BY comparing this with ſeveral other Scriptures, it hath been made apparent that there are four Sorts, Ranks or Degrees of Chriſtians, whoſe names are given to them according to the four moſt uſual diviſions of the Ages of Man, *viz.* Babes, Little Children, Young Men

Men and Fathers. The loweſt, though many times not the youngeſt for ſtanding, are Babes, who eat Milk and nothing but Milk, they cannot digeſt nor bear ſtrong meat. The ſecond are the Little Children (the firſt degree of them called ſpiritual or perfect) who have attain'd to know the Father, and to have the aſſurance and enjoyment of his Love: both theſe ſtates have been already treated of, and I am now to ſpeak of and to the third Claſſis, Form or Rank, *viz.* the Young men, who are twice mentioned in theſe two Verſes. Where you may take notice, 1. Of the perſons ſpoken of, Young Men. 2. That which is ſpoken of them, and the things are three, 1. That they are ſtrong. 2. That the Word of God abideth in them. 3. That they have overcome the wicked one: From whence we may obſerve, 1. That Young men Saints are ſtrong ones. 2. That the Word of God abideth in them. 3. That they have overcome the wicked one. 4. That they overcome the wicked one by ſtrength. 5. That their ſtrength (a great part of it) is from the Word of God abiding in them. I deſign not any long Diſcourſe about this, and therefore ſhall not handle theſe Propoſitions diſtinctly, and in the method wherein they lie, but give a brief Expoſition of the whole Text, under theſe following Heads.

1. What is meant by (νεανίσκοι) Young men, the true notion and import of the expreſſion, as intended in the Text. 2. What their ſtrength is, *Ye are ſtrong*, and wherein their

their ſtrength lies. 3. How they come by this ſtrength, *viz.* by the Word of God abiding in them: where 1. What is meant by the Word of God. 2. By the abiding of the Word of God in them. 4. What is meant by the evil one. 5. What the diſpute is about, between the Evil one and the Young men. 6. What by their having overcome the evil one. 7. How the Word of God abiding in them doth ſtrengthen them. 8. How this ſtrength or being ſtrong conduceth to the victory. 9. How great an Attainment this victory is to overcome the wicked one. 10. What are the ſigns and tokens of this victory. 11. What the iſſue and ſucceſs of this victory is. And then 12. make ſome Application.

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

What is meant by Young men.

I Shall not concern my ſelf about the notation or Etymology, but the ſenſe of the word (νεανίαι) and that not with reference to the Age but the State and Attainment of theſe Young men. Among very good Authors (Hiſtorians, &c.) the word is uſed in a Military ſenſe to ſignifie Souldiers, and ſo 'tis alſo in the Sacred Writ, to which uſe it is moſt properly applicable in the Text: Yea, 'tis uſed not only for a Souldier at large and in common, but for the flower of an Army, the choiceſt Souldiers; *Romana juventus* was the *Roman* Army, yea the flower and glory of both their Infantry and Cavalry; *Juventutem legere* is to liſt Souldiers, the choiceſt Souldiers. When the two Armies of *Iſh-boſheth* and *David* (under their two Generals *Abner* and *Joab*) met together by the Pool of *Gibeon*, *Abner* ſaid to *Joab*, *Let the Young men now ariſe and play before us* (as if War were but a ſport and paſtime!) and the Field where they fought and fell was called, *Helkath Hazzurim*, the Field of ſtrong men, 2 *Sam.* 2. 12,——16. accordingly (in a moral ſenſe) the Young men in our Text are ſaid to be ſtrong men; yea that they had fought with and overcome the evil one: the houſe of *Saul*, *Abner* and the men of *Iſrael* were beaten before the Servants of *David*, to allude

allude to what was the issue of the fight in the forementioned place.

These Young men Saints then are the Souldiers yea the Worthies of *Israel*; and 'tis as much as if St. *John* had said, I write to you the Souldiers, Warriers, and Champions: indeed the Babes may pass (*inter gregarios milites*) for common Souldiers, but these are the choice Young men, the good Souldiers of Christ Jesus, as *Paul* would have *Timothy* be, in being strong in the grace which is in Christ Jesus, 2 *Tim.* 2.1,——5. they are the Valiants of *Israel*. As the Babe Saint is taken out of sinners and becomes a middle state between the carnal and spiritual (of the first degree) *viz.* Little Children; and as little Children are taken out of Babes, and are a middle state between Babes and Young men; so Young men are taken out of little Children, and are a middle state between them and the Fathers. These Young men having known the Father and received the witness of his Spirit that they are the Children of God, they are now prepar'd for the Battel to enter the lists with Satan the tempter, as was the case of our Saviour; who when he had received the witness of the Spirit from Heaven, was led into the Wilderness to be tempted of the Devil. God doth not take his Young men out of Babes immediately, but out of little Children, who are made strong by the Word and Witness of God abiding in them; and the glory of these Young men is their strength: Which leads me to the second thing to be treated of, *viz.* what their strength is, and wherein it lies.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

What is meant by their being Strong.

THE Text tells us that these Young men are (ἰσχυροὶ) strong. The great Critick *Hesychius* makes the word equivalent with (πατητὴς *Calcator*) a treader down, and with (βέβαιος, *Firmus*) a settled and fixed person; and both these are suitable to the thing in hand: for our Young man is a conqueror and hath trodden down strength, *viz.* the Devil under foot, which is the usual phrase to denote conquest, victory and triumph, as may be seen in *Deut.* 33. 29. *Josh.* 10. 24, 25. *Psal.* 44. 5. *Rom.* 16. 20. beside many other places which speak to the same purpose. The other word (βέβαιος) which signifies a settled person is pat to the case also, for settlement flows from victory: others are aptt obe tossed to and fro, but these conquerors are fixed and immoveable.

But to keep close to the word and thing, I shall speak of this their being strong, as it notes the strength preceding the Victory, and whereby they overcome, and not that which succeeds to and abides after their conquest and victory. *Ye are strong*, i. e. ye are mighty and were so before the dispute and fight (as well as after) or else you had not overcome. The strength of the Young men notes and denominates them to be men of might and valour, men fit to undergo

dergo labour and to endure hardship, as the good Souldiers of Jesus Christ: and according to this notion you shall find that in the Scripture, the hardest and most difficult employments have been assigned to and performed by Young men, because they are strong and fit for such service, *The glory of young men is their strength*, Prov. 20. 29. 'tis thus remarqued concerning *Jeroboam*, 1 Kings 11. 28. *And the man Jeroboam was a mighty man of valour: and Solomon seeing the young man that he was industrious* (Hebr. that he did work) *he made him Ruler over all the charge* (Hebr. burthen) *of the house of Joseph*: here is might, valour, work and burden-bearing spoken of this Young man. In 2 *Tim.* 2. 1,——5. strength, indureing hardship and being a good Souldier are joyn'd all together. *Joshuah* sent young men to spy out the Land, *Josh.* 6. 23. The Porters mentioned in 1 *Chron.* 26. 6,——8. are said to be mighty men of valour, strong men, able men for strength for the service. Now as 'tis naturally, 'tis also morally the glory of Young men that they are strong. But the Question is,

Wherein their Strength doth lie?

'Tis said of *Sampson* that his strength was in his Hair; and of the *Behemoth* that his strength is in his Loyns, and his force in the Navel of his Belly, *Job* 40. 16. but wherein is the strength of these Young men? 'Tis originally in the Lord and the power of his might, *Ephes.* 6. 10. or the grace which is in Christ Jesus, 2 *Tim.* 2. 1. 'tis not the grace that is in us, but that which is in him that is sufficient

for us, 2 *Cor.* 12. 8, 9. and 'tis of his fulneſs that we receive grace for grace, as we have occaſion to uſe it, *Joh.* 1. 16. with *Heb.* 4. 16. God hath laid our help on him who is mighty to ſave, and who goeth forth conquering and to conquer till all his enemies be made his foot-ſtool, and ſubdued under his feet. But among and above all the grace communicated to them, their ſtrength is in Faith or in believing, for this is the victory whereby we overcome the world even our Faith, 1 *Joh.* 5. 4, 5. and as hereby we overcome the world, ſo him alſo who is in the world, that is, the Devil; and therefore though every piece of Gods Armour be of great uſe, yet we are adviſed above all to take the Shield of Faith, whereby we quench the fiery darts of the Devil, *Epheſ.* 6. 11,---16. *Abraham* was ſtrong in Faith: and in the ſtrength of Faith did *David* encounter *Goliah* (a type of the Devil) and 'twas by Faith that the Heroes mentioned in *Heb.* 11. wrought ſuch wonders and obtained victories, *Verſ.* 32,---34. ſo that theſe young men are ſtrong in the Lord, ſtrong in the Faith that is in them, they go out in his name and do prevail; 'tis not in their own but his ſtrength, *Phil.* 4. 13. for 'tis not they of themſelves do conquer, but he that liveth in them by Faith that makes them conquerors, *Rom.* 8. 37. Theſe Young men are Chriſts Armour-bearers and they ſlay after him, as 'tis ſaid of *Jonathan's*, 1 Sam. 14. 13. 'Tis Jeſus Chriſt who teacheth their hands to War, and their fingers to fight, ſo that the Devils bow of ſteel is broken by them,

and

and they believe down the Devil under their feet.

Through the ſtrength of Chriſt living in them by Faith, *Epheſ.* 3. 16, 17. they are (almoſt omnipotent, for they are) able to do all things, not only to abound, but to be abaſed and to endure hardſhip, *Phil.* 4. 11, ——13. and by the power of his might all things are poſſible to them. *Abraham* conquered doubts, fears, yea and naturally impoſſible things by ſtrength of Faith; he could live by Faith when his own body and *Sarahs* Womb were dead; the things which croſt and bound up his hope were no more to him, than new Ropes and green Withs (*viz.* the ſtrongeſt) were to *Sampſon* before his Hair was ſhaved, and his ſtrength (even God) departed from him. By this ſtrength *Jacob* prevail'd with God and had his new name from thence, *Iſrael* a prevailer with God. 'Tis by this ſtrength that the Young men overcome the evil one, and every one of his evils, for ſo his temptations are called, and the day of temptation is called, *The evil day*, Epheſ. 6. 13. *Be ſtrong*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *in the grace* (or that grace) *which is in Chriſt Jeſus*, 2 Tim. 2. 1. Now it may well refer to Faith which is in Chriſt Jeſus, for though it (as all other graces) be from him, yet this is in him (we believe in him) and accordingly the ſame Apoſtle bids the ſame *Timothy* fight the good fight of Faith, 1 *Tim.* 6. 12.

Faith is the Armour of proof againſt the Devils darts, as was hinted but lately: and

if we will resist the Devil so that he may flee from us, it must be by being stedfast in the Faith, 1 *Pet.* 5. 8, 9. Though the Devil roar most dreadfully like a Lyon, yet a strong and stedfast Faith will make this King of terrours to run away. And therefore as the Apostle saith, 1 *Cor.* 16. 13. Watch ye, stand fast in the Faith, quit ye like men, be strong (all Military Terms and fitted for these Young men) quit ye like men, *i. e.* like Young men Souldiers, likemen of War; and that you may so do, stand fast in the Faith, be strong in Faith. Look to Jesus then the Captain and bringer up also of our Faith, he hath conquered the Devil, be you his Armour-bearers and slay after him, by Faith following him your Leader, and as he did you also shall (if ye be Young men) overcome the evil one. But before I shew who this evil one is, and what 'tis to conquer him, I am ingaged to shew where and whence these young men have their strength in the expressions of the Text, and that is by the Word of God abiding in them.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

How they come by this Strength.

viz.

By the Word of God abiding in them.

THE next thing which is asserted concerning these Young men, is, That the Word of God abideth in them; which may be understood as spoken after as the sign, or as spoken before as a means or cause of the victory: as it refers to that, it imports that notwithstanding their fight, yet their bow (like *Josephs*) abode in strength, and that they were not weakened by the hot and sharp dispute which they had with the Devil: but in this sense I shall not handle it here, though I may touch it anon. As it refers to this (and I suppose it most properly doth) it shews us by what they were strengthened to overcome; for if the Word of God had not abode with them, they had not been strong enough to overcome the evil one: the weapon by which the Young men overcome him is the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God; or that by which the Young men are made so strong as to overcome the wicked one thereby, is the Word of God abiding in them. As their enemies are not carnal only, but spiritual, *Ephes.* 6. 12. so

their weapons are not at all carnal but ſpiritual, and ſo mighty through God, 2 *Cor* 10. 4, 5. There are two Queſtions to be propoſed and reſolved in relation hereunto: 1. What is meant by the Word of God. 2. What by the abiding of the Word of God in them, for 'tis not the Word of God in their hand, but in their heart, and not ſojourning, or lodging, but dwelling there.

Queſt. 1. *What is meant by the Word of God?*

In the general, by the Word of God we are to underſtand the Mind and Will of God reveal'd and made known in the holy Scriptures (which are ſo often called the Oracles, Speeches, Word or ſpeaking of God) as held forth in the Doctrines, Prophecies, Promiſes and Precepts thereof; but eſpecially as 'tis written in their hearts and imprinted there, according to the New Covenant. This Word of God in whole and in every part is hugely uſeful for inlightening, comforting and ſtrengthening that we may overcome the wicked one: 'tis to make the man of God perfect, 2 *Tim.* 3. 16, 17. 'tis the ſword of the Spirit, of which we may ſay (as *David* of another material one) there is none like it; for by it Chriſt himſelf overcame the wicked one. Yet more particularly, this may refer

1. To Chriſt himſelf who is the original Word of God the Father, by which or whom he made the World and hath ſpoken to the World by Word of mouth (as I may ſpeak) not by piece-meal and diverſe faſhions or tropes and figures (as of old) but clearly, plainly and fully,

fully, *Heb.* 1. 1,2. Now by Christ Jesus abiding and dwelling in us are we strong, *Phil.* 4. 13. or by the grace that is in him, of which he is full, as before: and without him we can do nothing, *Joh.* 15. 5.

2. It may refer to the promises of God which are so often called by the name of Word, thy Word, the Word of Promise, which is all one with the Word of God; to this *Abraham's* Faith did refer, and wherein he was so strong, *Rom.* 4. 20. and truly the Word of Promise being in and abiding in us doth not a little contribute to our strength and victory. By these we are not only made partakers of a divine nature, 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. but obliged, assisted and quickened to perfect holiness, 2 *Cor.* 7. 1. notwithstanding Temptations from without or within.

3. By the Word of God may here be understood, The witness of the Spirit bearing witness with their spirits, that they are the Children of God: This testimony abiding in them (as it did in Christ) doth strengthen them to overcome the evil one. When they were little Children they received this Testimony, and being now called to the War, this Word as well as Work of God abideth in them and makes them strong to the Battel. So that here is Father, Son, and Spirit (the Word of God in each respect) standing by them, and abiding in them, to strengthen them, to deliver them out of the mouth of the Lion, to keep them from every evil work, and to preserve them to the heavenly Kingdom, to use the Apo-

ſtles experiences and expreſſions recorded in 2 *Tim.* 4. 17, 18.

Queſt. 2. *What is meant by the abiding of Gods Word in them?*

I Anſwer, That it doth not only denote the in-being of the Word (in either of the reſpects forementioned) that there is ſuch a thing there, in their heart and inner man; nor barely the calling in to mind and keeping it in their memory; nor its lodging and ſojourning with them as an Inn-mate, no nor as a friend that is to depart: but it notes a ſettled abode or dwelling in efficacious power and influence. 'Tis ſaid of *Timothy*'s Mother and Grandmother that Faith *dwelt* in them, 2 *Tim.* 1. 5. And when the Apoſtle prays that the *Epheſians* may be ſtrengthened, he joyns this with it, that Chriſt may *dwell* in their hearts by Faith, *Epheſ.* 3. 16, 17. And 'tis ſaid of the happy ones, who are reproached for the name of Chriſt, that the Spirit of God and of Glory doth *reſt* upon them, 1 *Pet.* 4. 14. And our Saviour tells his Diſciples that there is no great things to be done, barely by being in him, unleſs they *abide* in him, and he in them, *John* 15. And the great thing in the Promiſe of the Holy Ghoſt was, that he ſhould *abide* with them. So that the ſenſe of this expreſſion can ſignifie no leſs than that the Word of God doth remain in them in the fulneſs of aſſurance, joy, and power, by which they are ſtrengthened and inabled to overcome the wicked one; and what he is I am next to diſcover. I might here have taken

taken occaſion to ſhew how the Word of God, abiding in them doth ſtrengthen their Faith and make them ſtrong; as alſo how their ſtrength of Faith doth contribute to their atchievements and victory, but I reſerve that to its proper place, and at preſent ſhall proceed, to explain the third thing in the Text which is ſaid of theſe Young men, *viz.* that they have overcome the evil or wicked one. As to this I ſhall have theſe things to treat of, *viz.* to ſhew what is meant by the evil one; what the diſpute (between the wicked one and the Young men) is about; that the Young men do overcome, and how they do overcome the wicked one, *&c.* Of theſe things I ſhall ſpeak in the Model and order firſt propoſed, which brings me to the fourth Chapter.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Shewing what or who is meant by the wicked one.

THE evil, or the evil *one*] this expreſſion, eſpecially if read in the Neuter Gender (τὸ πονηρὸν) is meant of more evils than one, yea of all evil; and ſo it may be underſtood in that Prayer which our Lord taught, *Matth.* 6. 13. and that Prayer which our Lord made and Prayed, *Joh.* 17. 15. and ſo in *Rom.* 12. 9. 1 *Joh.* 5. 19. but here it ſeems to be of the Maſculine Gender (ὁ πονηρὸς) and refers to one, *viz.* him who is eminently and principally the evil one, or the wicked one, whether ſpoken of a man or of the Devil. It is uſed to denote and ſet out a notorious wicked man that hath no fellow in wickedneſs, a Devil incarnate, an Antichriſt, as 'tis in 2 *Theſ.* 2. 3, 9. for though the word (πονηρὸς) be not there, yet (ἄνομος) an equivalent word is there; *Heſychius* makes theſe words to be ſynonymous, πονηρὸς, κακὸς, δεινὸς, κακοῦργος, all noting a moſt flagitious, profligate and terribly wicked perſon, as this word doth, 1 *Cor.* 5. 13. but it doth moſt uſually refer to the Devil himſelf, who is (ὁ πονηρὸς) the wicked one, ſo eminently as none is beſide him; and this may be obſerved to be undoubtedly true by comparing theſe following Texts, *Matth.* 13. 19. with *Luke*

Luke 8. 12. *Epheſ.* 6. 16. 1 *Joh.* 3. 12. now this is the evil or wicked one (not excluding others) that theſe Young men have overcome by being ſtrong, and the Word of God abiding in them: The Devil, being the Captain-General, the ring-leader, the Maſter of miſrule and miſchief, the reſt fall with him. In telling us that they have overcome the wicked one, 'tis implyed — that there was firſt a fight, an hot and ſharp encounter between the Devil and the Young men: the Devil did ſet upon them and tempt them ſhrewdly, and they had not a little to do till they won the field and day of him. And ſurely 'twere not temptations in common but ſome ſingular ones that theſe Young men were under: the Babes meet with common ones, but theſe with ſpecial ones, 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. As Chriſt Jeſus would not teach the Babes Doctrine which they could not bear, ſo he would not lead them into temptations, which they could not overcome: but theſe Young men, who are his Champions and Worthies, they encounter Giants (as *Davids* did) they war not againſt fleſh and blood (weak enemies) but againſt principalities and powers, *&c.* *Epheſ.* 6. It will therefore be expedient, if not neceſſary, to enquire after what the ſpecial temptations are which Young men encounter and overcome; or what the thing is that the diſpute is about between the Devil and the Young men Chriſtians.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

What the dispute is about, or what the temptations are which Young men do undergo and conquer.

IT must be remembred that these Young men are taken out from among the little Children, who have received the witness of the Spirit that they are the Children of God; and about this thing is the dispute between the Devil and them, *viz.* whether they be the Children of God or not: and so some understand that place (which speaks in Military language as if it properly referred to the state and condition of these Young men) *Ephes.*6.12. reading that which we render in high or heavenly places, about heavenly things, *viz.* our Title to Sonship and so to Heaven; this is the thing which the Spirit witnessed to their spirits, this the Devil calls in question and offers arguments against it: but all these arguments do the Young men overcome by the Word of God abiding in them, which strengthens their Faith to give glory to God and his Spirit as the faithful and true witness, notwithstanding all the cunning insinuations of wiles and the Devil.

To clear this up a little more, I humbly offer this to consideration, That the Saints (members of Christs body) are all of them more or less conformable to his Image, and to the several

several states and conditions wherein he was. Now such was the condescension of our great and good Lord Jesus, that he not only took flesh and blood (the humane nature) in common: but was found in our fashion and tempted like us in all things, yet still without sin; he went through all our states; he was once as a Babe, *viz.* made under the Law, and was in the likeness of sinful flesh, and so judged *as* carnal; withal, he was under Tutors and Governours, and was obedient to them, *Luke* 2. 46,——51. where 'tis added that he increased in wisdom as in age, which argues (without any disparagement) that his attainments (as in the flesh) were gradual. After a while he (being Baptized and Praying) hath the witness from heaven that he was the Son of God, *Luke* 3. 21, 22. and then was Jesus led up of the spirit into the Wilderness to be tempted of the Devil, *Matth.* 4. 1. and so past from the Childs to the Young mans state.

So then (in conformity hereunto) I conceive and declare that the temptations which the Young men undergo are the same (and about the same thing) which Jesus Christ underwent when after the witness of the Spirit he was tempted by the Devil. The Spirit first witnesseth, then the Devil calls this into question and puts Christ upon the proof, to which Christ answers and conquers by the Word of God abiding in him; and just so it was with these Young men: the phrases and things do so accord that it seems to me to be unquestionable. To come up then to what I intend by steps

and

and degrees, The Saints in conformity to Christ Jesus are but Babes at first, under the Law; in the likeness of sinners, as carnal; and are in subjection to Tutors and Governours: after this God is pleased to make himself known to some of them as a Father by the witness of his Spirit, and so they arrive to the state of Children: and then God singles out some of these to be tempted of the Devil about their Sonship, and they become (νεανίσκοι) Young men and brave Souldiers, who are taught to draw and wield the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, against the Devil, as Christ also did.

God was pleased to take this care of and about *Israel* under the Law, That when a man had taken a new Wife he should not go out to War, neither should he be charged with any business, but he should be free at home one year, and cheer himself with his Wife, *Deut.* 24. 5. So by way of allusion I may say that when the Saints marry a new Wife, the Fathers Love, they are often priviledged for some time to lie in his bosom and to cheer themselves with his Love: but then some of them are called out to war, *Job.* 21. 18,—22. and though therein they indure some hardship for a season, yet they become conquerors, which is a greater glory than not to fight at all (as 'tis in some sense to conquer death than to be immortal) and in the sense and strength of his Love they go forth conquering and to conquer, and so live in the triumph of their assurance, as our Saviour did, and become his Squires or Armor-bearers fighting under his banner of Love against

against the evil one, if ever he return again and make new assaults upon them, as he did upon Christ himself, from whom he departed but for a season; but then the after-temptations are of another nature, *viz.* persecutions and sufferings, as our Saviours were. Upon the whole I conclude that the temptations of the wicked one which the Young men have overcome, are such as Christs were, when tempted of the Devil after the witness of the Spirit; which what they were I shall briefely examine.

SECT. 1.

About Christs and the Young mens Temptations.

ABout these Temptations of Christ I have a larger Discourse than I think convenient to insert here (which if God please may come forth by it self in due time) at present I shall only touch the parallel between Christs and the Young mens temptations after the testimony of the Fathers Love. The Young men having been proclaimed, as Christ was, by a voice like to a Trumpet from Heaven, which gives a certain sound, that they are the Sons of God, and Heirs of God and glory; the Devil puts in his exceptions against this Title, and would fain have them believe that this is but Enthusiasm, a meer fancied and pretended apprehension, without any true and just ground; and therefore comes and calls it into question, cavilling (as at first) if thou be the Son of God, &c. He

He labours first to make a doubt of it; and if he cannot attain that, he then indeavours to bring them to presume upon and make bold with it. His first design is to make it doubtful, *Matth.* 4. 3. *If thou be the Son of God, command that these Stones be made bread*; this was after he had fasted forty daies and forty nights and was an hungred. That which he slyly insinuates is this; thou thinkest thy self, and supposest to have witness from Heaven, that thou art the Son of God; but if God were thy Father and did love thee, would he suffer thee to be so poor and hungry? and could he find it in his heart to put thee on so much hardship, as fasting, and so long too, &c. would he let thee be in the Wilderness among the Beasts? Fathers provide for their Children, and if thou wert his Son, surely he would maintain thee at a better rate than this, would he not? canst thou (it being thus with thee) believe thy self to be the Son of God?

Accordingly he pleads with and against the Children of God, when in a low estate in this world: it hath pleased God to chuse many of the poor of this world to be rich in Faith and Heirs of the Kingdom, *Jam.* 2. 5. and many of these who have this assurance are many times hard put to it in the world, and by Satan too because of this their poverty, as if 'twere inconsistent with the riches of Faith and title of an Heir to a Kingdom: but now as Christ answered and conquered, so do they by the Word of God abiding in them. One Answer serves them both, *viz. Man lives not by Bread* (a mans life

life consists not in the abundance of things enjoy'd) *but by every* or any *word that cometh out of the mouth of God*, any thing that God shall appoint, yea his Word can do it without any thing else. These things below are not good enough for Love-tokens, as hatred so Love is not known by external low or high conditions: Some may have Bread and no Love, and others Love, though they have no Bread. God can and will provide in due time. And what is't to thee, O Devil, if I am contented with the Will of God, and have meat to eat which thou knowest not of! Thus being strong in Faith by the Word of God abiding in them, they overcome the wicked one, and will not question their Sonship because they are poor and low brought in this world. Psal. 4. 6, 7.

SECT. 2.

A Continuation.

THE Devils first Argument being invalidated, he takes up another of a far different aspect, and would now have Christ be as confident and presuming as before, he would have had him diffident and doubtful; and so deals he with the Young men. Saith he, *Matth.* 4. 6. *If thou be the Son of God cast thy self down* (from the Pinacle) *for it is written, He shall give his Angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.* That this Promise did belong to Christ in a special maner, is undoubtedly true; and the Devil perceiving how precious the written Word of God was to Christ Jesus, he fills his mouth with Scripture and a Promise, but leaves out the condition of it to which the protection is annexed; and that which he would cunningly insinuate amounts to this, *q. d.* If thou be the Son wilt thou not trust thy Fathers power and promise? canst have better security than the power of a faithful God, and the Faith of a powerful God? hath he not appointed thee a Life-guard of Angels to bear thee in their Arms, and wilt be afraid?

Thus he often sets on the Young men; what need you be so solicitous and concern'd for means, have you not Promises of teaching, protection, preservation, *&c.* What will you not

not trust your Father and take his Word? But as before, so now one Answer fits both: 'tis this, *Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.* Indeed to trust in means is to despise God, but to neglect means is to tempt God. There is no need of casting my self down, of making such daring attempts, for there is a way down, and the fartheſt way about is the neareſt way home. *Thou ſhalt not tempt the Lord thy God*, i. e. thou ſhalt not go out of his which is thy way, and wherein only is preſervation promiſed. While there is an ordinary appointed way and means, I muſt not attempt nor preſume on extraordinary; that were to enquire after Signs and Miracles, when there is no need of them, which is no leſs than to tempt God. Thou, O Devil, doſt tempt me to tempt God, which is not the Genius of his Sons to do, though thou wouldſt have me to do it under that name: no Satan no, though thou tempt me I will not the Lord my God by going out of my way and neglecting the means of his appointment.

SECT. 3.

A further Continuation.

HAving been defeated in the way of dispute, the Devil takes another course and falls to offering of terms and making of Bargains; saith he, *Matth.* 4. 9. *All these things* (the Kingdoms of the world and the glory of them) *will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.* Here are fine and brave things, grandeur and gallantry; pleasure, prettiness and pomp; here are the lusts of the eye, the flesh and the pride of life, the things which the Young men in the world are inamour'd of even to fondness and dotage: these are the things which the *Alexanders* and *Julius Cæsars* of this world, the *Nimrods* and hunters after glory pursue with might and main ambition; do but fall down and bow the knee to worship me, and all shall be thine. And this seems to be the Devils (*Sacra Anchora*) last hope, if he cannot prevail this way he despairs; he hath choaked many a forward and far-gone Professor (as the thorny-ground hearers) with this bit and bait, as he did our first Parents even in innocency; and therefore St. *John* immediately after his having spoken to the Young men, subjoyns this, *Love not the world nor the things thereof,* 1 Joh. 2. 14, 15.

But let us hear the Answer from the Word of God, written not only in the Bible but in their

their hearts; *Then Jesus* (and the Young man Saint) *saith unto him, Get thee hence Satan, for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*, q. d. *No man can serve two masters, God and Mammon*, God and the Devil. God is too good a Master to be left, and the Devil too bad an one to be served. Get hence vile varlet, wretched caitiff, thou wicked one! dost think I will leave Heaven for Hell, God for the Devil, the Kingdom and glory of God, for the Kingdoms and glory of this world, which *is all but vanity and vexation of Spirit!* Is God and Heaven, and my soul no more worth than this! avaunt Devil, get hence for shame! dost think I will sell my Soul for a paultry vanity, and become a Lover of that which will make me the enemy of my God, and make a God of mine enemy; no, no, avoid Satan and get hence.

Now after this the Devil leaves him and runs away; he cannot stand before the Word of God: if he be resisted (by being stedfast in the Faith) he will flee; and if he flee he is (for the present) conquered; and he is put to flight and conquered by the *It is written*, the Word of God abiding in power and efficacy in the Young men; as he was by our Saviour. Thus I have briefely shewn the parallel between the temptations which attended Christ and which attend the Young men (after the witness of the Spirit concerning their Sonship) which are defeated and put to flight by the Word of God. The signs of this victory

ſhall be ſhewn openly as in triumph in due time, but at preſent I ſhall ſpeak to one and only to one temptation more, which aſſaults ſome of the little Children and the Young men, and then proceed to prove the victory by the ſpoiles which ſhall be brought forth as ſigns thereof.

SECT. 4.

One Temptation more which they undergo and conquer too.

THere is one Argument which the Devil could not make uſe of againſt Chriſt (who was without ſin) but doth often make uſe of againſt the little Children and Young men too (if poſſible, to) make them call their Sonſhip into queſtion; 'tis that they are not without ſin, but do in many things offend either by doing evil, or omitting good, or by falling ſhort of their duty and giving God the glory due to his name. Thou (ſaith the Devil) canſt not be a Child of God, nor know him as a Father, for ſuch do not commit ſin nor can they; do but read 1 *Joh.* 3. 4——10. and 5. 18. and tell me what thou canſt ſay to theſe things? if thou ſay thou ſinneſt not, I will prove it; if thou ſay thou haſt no ſin, thou doſt lie and ſinneſt in ſaying ſo; and if thou ſin, how canſt thou ſay that thou art born of God, when the Scripture ſaith that he who is born of God doth not commit ſin? This is a two-

two-edged Sword, an Argument that cuts on both sides; it seems to put these poor souls to a *Dilemma*: but yet by the Word of God abiding in them, they defeat this also.

To this they Answer, 1. By following the example of Christ Jesus in opposing truly quoted and rightly understood Scripture, to the Scripture which is falsely quoted and misapply'd (which latter is as bad as the former) the Devil wrests and so wrongs the Scripture (and knows it) though it be to his own confutation and confusion: they say (as our Saviour did) again, It is written, and as the Devil knows that the seeming opposite Scriptures may be reconciled, so he cannot endure that they should be reconciled; he will rather be silent and answer nothing, as when Christ opposed his half quotation by a whole one. Thus then may the Young man Answer; Satan, thou knowest that *Abraham*, *Moses*, *David*, &c. were born of God and had the witness of his Spirit that they were his Children, and yet were not without sin, but sinned after their new-birth or conversion; and thou knowest that if we say (the *we* spoken of in the foregoing Verses, who had fellowship with God) if we say that we have not sinned (since conversion) we make him a lyar and his Word is not in us, 1 *Joh.* 1. 10. This the Devil either cannot or will not reconcile, though he knows 'tis reconcileable with the fore-alledged Texts, and therefore they are misapplyed as to the case in hand and the persons concern'd in this dispute. But,

2. Say the Young men, the Texts which thou hast quoted, do not seem to speak of every or any sin in any degree, but of a special Sin, *viz.* hating or not loving of the Brethren, which they that are born of God cannot be guilty of, 1 *Joh.* 4. 20. but thou knowest, Satan, and that to thy vexation, that I love the Brethren, and am past from Death to Life. To this purpose see what's said in the Treatise of Babes, in the Chapter of their love to the Brethren. Or else it may refer to the sin unto death, 1 *Joh.* 5. 16, 17, 18. Yet,

3. If the Text may not be restrain'd to that, I can say further that I do not live in sin nor make a trade of sin as thou dost, I am no sin-maker as thou art: I sin not as they that are of thee who workest in the Children of disobedience that they may fulfil the lusts and wills of the flesh, *Ephes.* 2. 1, —— 3. and of such (thou canst not deny but) the quoted Texts do speak.

4. I can say yet more in a true sense, as the Apostle doth, *Rom.* 7. 15, —— 20. that 'tis not I (who am born of God) that sin, but sin that dwelleth in me: though I with my flesh may (alas that I do!) serve the Law of sin, yet thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord, with the mind I my self do serve the Law of God, *Rom.* 7. 25. *There is therefore no condemnation to me who am in Christ Jesus, and walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*, Rom. 8. 8. Though I (wretch that I am!) may be sins Captive yet not its Subject that I should obey it in the lusts

lusts thereof; sin may domineer but hath no dominion over me, because I am not under the Law, but under Grace, *Rom.* 6. 12,—18. thou Satan knowest that I am none of sins Servants! Beside,

5. I confess my sin and have my pardon, and what dost thou Satan say to this, or what canst thou say against it that God should forgive my sin? according to what is said in 1 *Joh.* 1. 8, 9. have I not reason to be of good cheer (though by reason of thee my warfare is not accomplished, yet) God hath spoken to mine heart and said, *Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.* 'Tis not against thee that I have sinned, but against God (which goes most to my heart) and if God pardon me, what's that to thee? is thine eye evil because God is good and gracious? may he not do (without thy leave) what he will with his own? Lastly,

6. Satan, to stop thy mouth, *I have an Advocate with the Father* (both his and mine) *Jesus Christ the righteous*, who is the Propitiation for my sin, 1 *Joh.* 2. 1, 2. Thou hast nothing to lay to the charge of Gods Elect, for he justifies, *Rom.* 8. 33. Canst thou condemn? seeing Christ hath died, yea and is risen again (he died for our sin, and is risen for our Justification, *Rom.* 4. 25.) yea he is at the right hand of God and appears in Heaven for us, and ever liveth to make Intercession for them that come to God by him, and so saves perfectly and to the utmost; what hast thou to say to this? away Satan, for I have heard a

voice, a loud voice saying from Heaven, Now is Salvation, and strength, and the Kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ, for the accuser of the Brethren is cast out, which accused them before our God day and night, but they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their Testimony, and loved not their lives unto the Death, *Rev.* 12. 10, 11.

This shall suffice to have spoken to this thing, from whence a fair way is open to proceed in to shew what is meant by their having overcome the wicked one: where I am to shew what the notion of overcoming doth import, and in what sense and how far they have overcome the wicked one.

CHAP. VI.

What is meant by their overcoming the wicked one.

TO their being strong, and the Word of God abiding in them, this is added, that they have overcome the wicked one, *viz.* the Devil. That it is so, needs no proof, for St. *John*'s saying so is witness enough, *And we know that his witness is true*, Joh. 21. 24. That therefore which we have to do is, 1. To shew in what sense they have, And 2. how and how far they have overcome the wicked one.

To

To overcome is a word that is used in a Forensick and in a Military sense, as it refers to the Court and to the Camp, 'tis a Law term, and a term of War: in a legal or Court sense, 'tis to overcome by right and justification, to be cleared and justified as to any charge and indictment laid against them; to overcome in a Military sense, is to conquer by might, by dint of Sword; which in the School sense is to overcome by force of Argument. In the first sense to be cleared and justified is to overcome, as appears by comparing *Psal.* 51. 4. with *Rom.* 3. 4. in the *Psalm* 'tis that thou maist be justified and cleared, in the *Romans* 'tis that thou maist be justified and overcome: now in this sense not only the Young men, but all the Saints are conquerors and do overcome, that is, there is no condemnation but justification to and for them, *Rom.* 8. 1. with 33, 34, ——— 38, 39. though they are condemned by men yet justified by God, as Christ was put to death in the flesh, but justified in and by the Spirit. Though the Devil, accuse yet Christ their Advocate pleads for and to their justification; and they are freed (*in foro Dei*) in Gods Court, which is a relieving Chancery against the cruel Sentences of Common Law; so that nothing separates them from the Love of God in Christ. To this sense speaks also the 1 *Cor.* 15. 57. 1 *Joh.* 5. 18.

But in the Military sense 'tis that we are most specially to understand the conquest and

over-

overcoming ſpoken of theſe Young men in our Text; they have overcome by meer ſtrength of the word and Faith, ſo that they not only overcome him as juſtified from his charge and indictment, but overcome his temptations by dint of Sword, *i. e.* by ſtrength of Argument from the Word abiding in them. If the Devil plead ſin and guilt, they plead Chriſt and his ſatisfaction; if the Devil witneſs againſt them that they are not, they produce the witneſs of the Spirit that they are the Children of God, and ſo overcome him. So that the Young-man is a double conqueror, by right and might; by Word and Sword; at the Bar and in the Field; they overcome by ſtrength of Faith or believing in Chriſt, or rather by the ſtrength of Chriſt believed in. But then,

How and how far have they overcome? the Devil is not ſlain, he is in being ſtill, and hath a power of tempting ſtill; how then is it ſaid, that they *have* overcome the wicked one? may not the Devil rally and recruit again? may he make no more aſſets on the Young men? To this ſome make Anſwer thus, that the *Preter* Tenſe is put for the *Future*, q. d. you ſhall as certainly overcome as if you had overcome: while the Word of God abideth in you, you ſhall never be overcome, and ſo do overcome, and may be ſaid to have overcome. So the called of God are ſaid to be ſaved becauſe they ſhall be ſaved, 1 *Cor.* 1. 18. with 2 *Tim.* 1. 9. So Chriſt is ſaid to have, yea ſaith

that

that he hath overcome the world, *Joh.* 16. 33. when yet his conquest was not compleat till his Resurrection and Ascension, nor is fully and wholly so till all his enemies be made his Footstool. So he saith, *Joh.* 17. 4. *I have finished the work thou hast given me to do*, when as yet he had not died, which command he was to obey, having received it from his Father, *Joh.* 10. 18. Many other places are spoken at this rate to denote the certainty of what shall be; 'tis said to be done because it shall be done. So say they here, the Young men have overcome the wicked one, *i. e.* they are to fight, and though the dispute be so hot and fierce, as that to a stander by it may be doubtful, whether the Young men will overcome the Devil, or the Devil them, yet 'tis so sure that they shall overcome, that 'tis said they have overcome. But though this be often true and may be admitted as a truth here, yet I doubt not but there is a reality, and not only a figure in the speech, *they have overcome*: they are conquerors and have obtained victory already.

I shall therefore shew how they may be said to have overcome the wicked one in the Scripture sense as to what is past, the incounters that have hitherto been between them. When the Devil is resisted he flees, and so is for the present conquered; as he fled from Christ and was conquered as to that battel, *Jam.* 4. 7. 1 *Pet.* 5. 9. He who attains to do that which he is exhorted to,

attains

attains that for which he exhorted to it; so that being exhorted to resist the Devil that he may flee, they find that when he is resisted he doth flee, and so is conquered for that season. Besides, they stand and keep their ground, which is a further expression of victory, they not only withstand, but stand, *Ephes.* 6. 11,——13. *Ephes.* 4. 27. and that this resistance and standing is by Faith, being strong in Faith, is clear from 1 *Pet.* 5. 9. *Ephes.* 6. 16. and thus by resisting, standing firm and maintaining their ground, they have hitherto overcome the wicked one.

The summ of it amounts to this, *q. d.* I write to you Young men because ye are strong, and have overcome the wicked one, *i. e.* you have thus far, hitherto, to this day resisted and kept your ground and have not given place to the Devil, you have stood it out against all his wiles and subtleties, you have made him flee by the power of the Word of God which made you strong in Faith, the grace which is in Christ Jesus; and this your strength abides with you, as it did with *Caleb*, *Josh.* 14. 11. So that if the Devil set on you any more, you know how to conquer by the same Word again. Go on thou mighty man in this thy might, for the Lord of Hosts is with thee, go on conquering and to conquer, go and prosper. Keep on your Armour, lay not aside your Sword nor your Shield, for perhaps the Devil will rally his scattered forces and fall on again. Or he is it may be preparing other kind

kind of temptations for you, *viz.* sufferings and death as he did for Christ: but you (as he) shall rise again and live for ever, and be where Satan hath had no place for some thousands of years, nor never shall any more, *viz.* in Heaven: and by not loving your lives to the death, you conquer the Devil again, as Christ also did, *Rev.* 12. 11. *Heb.* 2. 14, 15. And thus I have evinced that the Young men have overcome the wicked one and shall for ever. I now pass on to the other things which relate to this victory, and then shall the Young men triumph.

CHAP. VII. and VIII.

How the Word of God strengthens you, and how strength conduceth to the Victory.

HAving already clear'd the Young mans victory to be by strength, and his strength to be from the Word of God abiding in him, I shall joyn these two Chapters or Heads together, and shew therein how the Word of God conduceth to their strength, and how their strength conduceth to the victory.

As we should faint if we did not believe, *Psal.* 27. 13. and that fainting would prove our strength of Faith to be but small, *Prov.* 24. 10. So our Faith would faint were it not upheld and quickened by the Word of God: this I might evince from the several accounts I gave of the Word of God, and how it might be understood

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in the Text in relation to the Young mens strength and victory; but I shall now consider it only in the general, which will be applicable enough to each particular acceptation of it instanced in before. To this purpose 'tis not a little observable, how *David* (who was one of Gods Worthies) doth celebrate the Word of God in relation to this very thing, especially in *Psal.* 119. he tells us, *Vers.* 9. that the Young man clears and cleanseth his way by taking heed thereto according to Gods Word; and therefore *Ver.* 11. he hid Gods Word in his heart, that he might not sin against him, *v.* 25. he begs for quickening according to his Word; so again, *Ver.* 107. and 154. this was his comfort in his affliction that Gods Word had quickened him, *Ver.* 50. and when his soul melted for heaviness he prays to be strengthened according to Gods Word, *Ver.* 28. His Word was a light unto his path, and a lamp to his feet, *Ver.* 105. And he had wherewith to answer him that reproach'd him (the accuser of the Brethren) because he trusted in his Word, *Vers.* 41, 42. God was his hiding-place and Shield, for he hoped in his Word, *Vers.* 114. and prays that his steps may be ordered in his Word, to this end, that not any iniquity might have dominion over him. *Ver.* 133. with many other passages to this effect, to declare the usefulness of the Word of God for the strengthening of him.

The Word of God is true, yea 'tis truth; and (*magna est veritas & prævalebit*) truth is strong, stronger than the Devil who is a lyar (and a lie is weak) 1 *Joh.* 4. 4. now this Word

of

of truth discovers the Devils devices, falsehoods, sophistries, methods, stratagems, and all his deceits: thus the Word of God strengthens (*removendo prohibens*) by taking away lets, impediments; and hindrances such as are doubts and fears, distrusts and jealousies; that the soul is no longer under a Spirit of Bondage again to fear, *Rom.* 8. 15. 2 *Tim.* 1. 7. and withall it comes in with counsels, comforts and quickenings (as in the forequoted *Psalm*) all which are strengthening things. Thus their eyes being opened and inlightened (as *Jonathan's* were) by tasting this honey, they are strong for the battel; and by Faith they see (as the Prophet's man did) more for them than there are against them; and therefore faint not, especially while they look (as *Moses* did) to invisible things, 2 *Cor.* 4. 16,——18. and see a great recompence of reward, and all things co-working for their good and glory. As the sight and speech of a General doth often quicken and animate his Souldiers; so doth a believing sight of Jesus, *Heb.* 12. 2. and his Word puts life and courage into them, *Act.* 27. 23. 2 *Tim.* 4. 16, 17. And Christ as he did cast out, so doth he conquer the Devil by his Word. Our own sayings an dreasonings are weak & will not do it (as 'twas in the case of the Sons of *Sceva*, *Act.* 19. 13,——16.) but when the Word of God speaks, 'tis effectual, and the Devil cannot stand before it. Again,

2. As the Word strengthens Faith, so strength of Faith conduceth to and obtains the victory; the reason is, because where Faith is, God is, and where God is, there is strength, and such as

againſt which none can prevail. Hence had the Heroes and Martyrs (mentioned, *Heb.* 11.) all their ſucceſs and victory. When *Gideon* had expreſt but a little Faith (not without a mixture of doubting) yet ſaith the Angel to him, *Go in this thy might, the Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour*, Judges 6. 12,——14. If God be with us, it matters not who be againſt us; hence 'tis that the Saints of God (ſome of them) have out-braved men, Devils, dangers and death, as you may ſee in theſe following places, which I refer to your peruſal, *Pſal.* 4. 6. *Iſa.* 8. 9, 10. *Micah* 7. 7,—— 9. 1 *Cor.* 15. 55, 57. 2 *Cor.* 12. 9, 10. So that Faith is of huge uſe for conqueſt, ſeeing the victory (as the Eagle her prey) a far off, and is ſure of victory even in the midſt of the battel, *Rom.* 8. 37. Thus then we have ſeen how the Young-men overcome the wicked one; and how great this victory is I am now to diſcover.

CHAP. IX.

Setting forth the greatneſs of this Victory.

FOr the illuſtration and diſplay of this victory how great it is, I ſhall only acquain you with the formidableneſs of the enemy that is overcome; 'Tis no puny, no petty pigmie that is conquered but an huge Giant, a man of war from his youth, who hath ſlain many a ten thouſand in his time. 'Tis an eaſie matter to tread a worm under foot (and man is no more,

or

or very little more, but flesh and blood, which is weak) but to tread Satan underfoot (the Prince of the Air, and God of this world, as some understand the 2 *Cor.* 4. 4.) is a conquest with a witness, a signal one! To enter a City (such as *Laish* was) without Gates and bars is no great atchievement; but to attaque the Gates of Hell and to put the Devil to flie from his strong holds, is a miracle of Victory! stronger is he that subdueth this Spirit (as well as his own) than he that takes a fenced City, *Prov.* 16. 32.

Alexanders conquests, and *Julius Cæsars veni, vidi, vici*, were nothing to this: *Jobs* conquest excels them all. I might illustrate it by the types in the Wars of *Israel*, and instance especially in *Amalek* & *Goliah*, who were overcome by *Joshuah*, *Caleb* and *David*, the Young-men Saints of their generation: but I shall wave that, and take a view of this great *Turk*, the Devil, in and under these five Considerations. 1. I shall consider him in his strength. 2. In his malice. 3. In his subtlety. 4. In his industry and unwearied pains-taking. 5. In his acquists and victories over many myriads: by all which it will appear how great and glorious this victory is.

1. Let us Consider him in his strength. He is the strong man and the strong man armed, and he that overcomes him needs be strong indeed, as 'tis expresst, *Luke* 11. 21, 22. He is the roaring Lion, which notes both his strength and terribleness, 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. and cannot be resisted but by being strong in Faith, *Vers.* 9. Beside,

they are legions, very many, and therefore are expreſt in the plural number and by words that ſignifie ſtrength, *Epheſ.*6.12. Principalities, powers, ſpiritual wickedneſſes, and rulers of the darkneſs of this world, againſt whom we need go armed with the Armour of God, all the Armour of God and the power of his might, *Epheſ.*6.10,11,13. They are ſpoken of in the abſtract, and as inviſible and in the dark, which makes them ſo much the more terrible. And yet theſe principalities and powers are not able to effect their deſign, but over them the Young men are more than conquerers, or as the word may be read, they do over-overcome, *Rom.*8.37,38,39. therefore the victory is great and glorious.

2. Let us conſider the Devil in his malice, revenge and envy. Who can ſtand before envy? he is the adverſary, the envious one, *Mat.*13.28. and from this envy and enmity is the accuſer of the Brethren: and to be ſure, malice will do its worſt. He is διάβολος the reproacher and darter, and contrary to the Law of Arms he fights with poiſoned Arrows, with fiery darts, which are ſet on fire of Hell, poiſoned with the venome of envy and malice, *Epheſ.*6.16. His ſlanderous accuſations are ſuch as would burn up the Saints, were it not that the Shield of Faith doth quench them. He put God upon afflicting *Job* without a cauſe, he ſlandered *Job*, but *Job*'s Faith and patience overcame theſe fiery darts, which put him upon no leſs than to curſe God; they were thrown to enflame his Spirit againſt God, but were quenched by Faith. Oh what a glorious victory 'tis to conquer

conquer envy and malice it ſelf, whetted by revenge and enmity!

3. Let us conſider him in his ſubtlety. He is not only ſtrong and malicious (which doth ſtrengthen his ſtrength) but he is ſubtle too, which doth ſtrengthen his malice. He is the ſubtle Serpent; and if he were ſo ſubtle, when he was but young, as to deceive *Eve* and *Adam* in innocency, *Gen.* 3. with 2 *Cor.* 11. 3. what is he now he is grown old? the old Serpent (which hath deceiv'd the whole world in all Ages) *Rev.* 12. 9,—11. he is improved in ſubtlety by long practice: he is a *Proteus* and *Chamelion* that can turn himſelf into any ſhape and colour; rather than fail, he will (though he cannot endure the light) turn himſelf into an Angel of Light, and hath got the knack and faculty of ſpeaking Scripture, he will cant in Scripture language, and fill his mouth full of good words and fair ſpeeches to deceive. He goes about (πλεονεκτεῖν) to circumvent and get advantages by the (νοήματα) many devices which he hath, 2 *Cor.* 2. 11. the many fetches and catches which he hath ſtudied and practiſed theſe many years. He hath windings and turnings, methods of wiles, he is an old Fox, hath arts and tricks not a few, *Epheſ.* 6. 11. He is a crafts-maſter; though an enemy, yet he pretends friendſhip and good will, 2 *Cor.* 11. 2, 3. He will pretend himſelf much concern'd for us, yea more than we are for our ſelves (as he did at firſt) and as if he were troubled with ſcruples of conſcience for our ſakes, he will propound Queries, and ask us if we do not miſtake

God, and so take less liberty and enjoy less good, than God allows us, or at least than may be attain'd to, by but taking a step in the way that he will shew us, that we may be Gods forsooth; but he means such *Elohim* as himself and fellows, *i. e.* Devils. He hath lying wonders in readiness to ape Gods true miracles, as in *Ægypt* and *Rome*. He can juggle and play Legerdemain to purpose, 2 *Thes.* 2. 9. In short, he is a deep Politician, for we read of the depths of Satan, *Rev.* 2.24. Now to conquer such an one requires strength, *Ephes.* 6. 10, 11. and the Young men are they who conquer him; and 'tis a great victory!

4. Let us consider him in his constant and unwearied industry: The Pharisees and Jesuits though very near of kin to him and well acquainted with him, and follow him (περιπατεῖτε) in compassing Sea and Land to make Proselytes, do yet fall short of him, for he is night and day *walking about seeking whom he may devour*, 1 Pet. 5. 8. He takes no rest in the night nor will suffer others to rest night or day. Now add this to the rest, his industry to his strength, malice and art, and it inhanceth the Victory not a little. I will mention but one thing more, and that is

5. His acquests and victories which he hath obtain'd in all Ages; alas, how many have fallen down at his feet! he hath deceiv'd and destroy'd a world of men, *Rev.* 12. 9. 1 *Joh.* 5. 19. 2 *Cor.* 4. 4. *Joh.* 14. 30. *Ephes.* 2. 2. yet this Devil hath been defeated in his own Kingdom, even where his Throne was, and that by these young men,

men, Rev. 2. 13. And this victory is the more glorious, confidering the advantages the Devil hath over us as a ſpirit thus qualified with ſtrength, malice and art, thus fleſh'd with ſucceſs. This ſhall ſuffice to have (by it) ſet forth the greatneſs of the Victory: I now proceed to ſhew the ſigns and tokens of this Victory, and ſo make way for the young mens triumph.

CHAP. X.

The tokens and ſigns of the Victory.

PErhaps ſome will be apt to ſay, That this is but a Romantick ſtory, a kind of Knight-Errantry, 'tis but for talk and diſcourſe; where are the erected Pillars, and the trophies of honour that ſhould witneſs the Victory? where is *Goliahs* ſword and head? where are the ſpoiles and the booty, the ſigns of their victory? *But hear ye deſpiſers and wonder, for we have not brought to you a fiction or a cunningly deviſed fable, but words of truth and power,* as ſhall be yet further evinced. And ſeeing we have formerly paralleled the Temptations which Chriſt did and theſe Young men alſo did undergo and conquer after the witneſs of the Spirit received, we ſhall now parallel the ſigns and tokens of their reſpective victories.

When our Saviour was tempted and the Devils thruſt put by and his argument defeated, he wholly waves the aſſuming of it, and ſhifts his ground as not able to ſtand upon it nor to it;

which is one sign of his being so far conquer'd. He attempts the second time another way but with no better success, and therefore sounds a parle and comes to treat; which is another sign that his Forces fail'd him: when he can do no good (no evil) this way neither, he doth not only retreat but run away asham'd, as one that flees in Battel, as 'tis said of them, 2 *Sam.* 19. 3. so that the field was left to Christ Jesus, and thereupon the Angels came and ministred to him, *i. e.* did him homage as to a great conqueror, singing and celebrating his praise, as we have cause to believe. After this our Saviour went in the power of the Spirit (into *Galilee*) like a conqueror that had won the day and night go where he would, as 'tis remarked concerning him, *Luke* 4. 14, 15. Though the Devil attempted to invalidate the witness of the Spirit, yet he went in the power of the Spirit, and that Testimony ever after, it being not at all weakened by the encounter: but went up and down teaching his Gospel and giving forth his Laws, yea delivering Captives, *&c.* as it follows, *Vers.* 18. See *Luk.* 11. 22. But it seems the Devil departed but for a season, for he came again, *Joh.* 14. 30. 'tis true; but pray observe that he never attempted with the former weapons again, never disputed Christs Son-ship again; but falls to down-right persecution, without finding any thing in Christ whereof to accuse, or wherefore to condemn him; as the Devils own Judge (even *Pilate* himself) declares in open Court, once & again. But here also Christ was too hard for him, for though the Devil bruised his heel,

yet

yet Christ brake the Devils head, according to the first Promise, *Gen.* 3.15. by dying he did destroy him that had the power of death, *viz.* the Devil, *Heb.* 2.14. and accordingly keeps the Keys to this day, *Rev.* 1.18. so that the Devil was hugely out in his Politicks, and was never so much defeated (as now) since he was a Devil: for when Christ was Crucified he spoil'd principalities and powers, triumphing over them, *Col.* 2.14,15. So that now the Saints need not fear either Law, Death or Devil, *Heb.* 2.14, 15. 1 *Cor.* 15.55,——57. Yet further, our Saviour not only rose from the dead (and so was declared to be the Son of God) with a (*non obstante*) notwithstanding the Devils guard kept the Sepulchre; but he ascended on high and rid in triumph through the Devils principality (the Air, of which he is Prince) and as the Devil could not hinder him from ascending to the Father, so nor his gifts from descending on men (another token of his victory and triumph) then, then 'twas that he led Captivity Captive, *Ephes.* 4.8, 9.

I might now draw resembling tokens of the Victory of our Young men, the Armor-bearers of Christ, who slay after him: but I shall not stay to shew these parallels which may easily be observed by the Reader, I will produce only some as evidences of their Victory. They stand firm and fixed and lose no ground nor strength, *for ye are strong*, saith the Text, *and the Word of God abideth in you* after this war, and in the power of the Spirit and his Word of witness, they (as our Saviour did) go about their work

and

and imployment, finishing that (as he did) which the Father hath given them to do, and so glorifie him on earth. The very Angels become ministring Spirits to them, *Heb.* 1. ult. They have their journals to shew how and where they conquer'd; his broken weapons and defeated arguments they carry away as spoiles, and come out of the Battel inrich'd with experiences; which (with their Prayers to God for them) they distribute as so many gifts unto their Brethren, as *Paul* did, 2 *Cor.* 1. 4,--6. and these are no small signs of their hitherto victory, not to mention the Devils flight. As to what may be hereafter, the (ὑστερήματα χειστῦ) the sufferings which attend them from the envy of a defeated Devil, these also they overcome by not loving their lives, but being faithful to the death, *Rev.* 12 11. and 2. 10. none of these things move them, *Acts* 20. 23, 24. for in (as well as after) these things they are more than conquerors, *Rom.* 8. 36, 37. They are of so great and noble Souls and Spirits, that they accept not deliverance, but expect and shall obtain a better Resurrection, *Heb.* 11. 35. And this perseverance to the end is often called *overcoming*, in the Epistles to the Seven Churches. I now go on to shew the conclusion of the whole matter, *viz.* the issue and success of the Victory, as to their after frames and Conversations.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

The result of the Victory as to their frames and Converſations.

BEſides what flows from their having the witneſs of the Spirit, which is the ſame with that of the little Children, of which before; there is a further influence from this victory, which almoſt doubles their joy, love and obedience, it being another witneſs (as it were) or a confirmation of the former, an aſſured aſſurance.

1. It fills them with joy and rejoycing in the Lord, that of him they make their boaſt and to him they give the glory all the day long. They rejoyce not only as the Diſciples did, that the Devils are ſubject to them, but that their names are written in the Book of Life, *Luke* 10. 17. They triumph in the praiſes of God, and ſay, *Thanks be to God who hath given us the Victory through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* When they erect an Altar, the name and Motto is, *Jehova niſſi*, the Lord my Banner, and the Lord my ſtrength; 'twas he that taught me to fight and gave me the victory: *Not to us, not to us, but to thy name be all the glory.* They ſet up their *Eben-Ezer*, ſaying, *Hitherto the Lord hath helped us.* They rejoyce in the Salvation of God, and in the name of their God they ſet up their Banners. They glory not in riches nor ſtrength, but in the Lord. In fine, I may tell you that they ſing the 18. *Pſalm.*

2. The

2. The Lord having given them rest and settlement (which is the consequent and effect of victory) they do not only rejoyce and sing songs; but they study what to return to the Lord for all his benefits; they dedicate all the spoiles to God; they study (as *David* did) to build an house for God, and lay up all they can as a preparation for it: they have friendship with *Hiram* (the high Life) if I may allude or allegorize, that he may assist in this great work, and they may live above where the way of life is to them that are wise, that their affections and conversation also may be in Heaven. They Court not the *Dalilahs* of this worlds pleasure (as too many *Samson*-like conquerors do) nor turn Laplins to lust after their great successes; but study to walk with God and to please him, yea therein to abound more and more till they walk worthy of him to all well-pleasing. They put not God off with words and a Song, and then forget his works; but they give and live thanks to God, the fruit of their lips and of their lives.

3. They are exceeding humble and lowly towards their weak Brethren; they dare not Lord it over the Lords inheritance (their Brethren) though but Babes: but they give them their helping hand, and communicate their experience to them for their relief and assistance, as *Paul* did, 2 *Cor.* 1. 4, 6. If any be overtaken they endeavour to restore him with a Spirit of meekness: for these Souldiers are not proud like others and lifted up, but being spiritual they know tenderness, and are acquainted with the heart

heart of tempted ones, having been tempted themselves; and so are conformable to their great High-Priest and Captain-General of their faith and victory, which to brave Souldiers is alwaies an obligation to meekness and moderation, not a spur to ambition, nor a stirrup to pride. Yea though some Babes are apt to envy their attainment and glory, yet they pity them and bear (as well as bear with) their infirmities.

4. They keep Centinel and strict watch, standing and walking in their Armor (that of God) alwaies: they turn not their Swords into Plow-Shears, nor their Spears into pruning hooks, as if all were over, but they watch because of their adversary the Devil, and keep strong guards, not knowing but that the Devil may fall on again; they are not secure, nor do they lay by their weapons, as if they should know war no more.

5. From the experiences they have had they take courage and good heart of grace to trust in God for the future, nor in their Sword or in their Bow (though it like *Josephs* abide in strength). Though some Young men faint and Youths fail (by reason of presumption) yet these wait on the Lord and renew their strength, they mount up with wings as Eagles, they run and are not weary, they walk and faint not, *Isa.* 40. 30, 31. They look on past deliverances as earnest of and security for future deliverances, as *Paul* did, 2 *Cor.* 1. 10. 2 *Tim.* 4. 17, 18.

6. They intangle not themselves with the affairs of this life, that they may please him who hath chosen them to be Souldiers, 2 *Tim.* 2. 4. They live

live above the lusts of the eye, the lusts of the flesh and pride of life, the love of these things being inconsistent with the love of God: they make *Moses* his choice, being come to Age as he was, *Heb.* 11. 24,—27. They (as 'tis said of *Themistocles*) will not stoop to take up (much less to take up with) these things which are below; this earth is for their feet to tread on, and not to set their hearts on; no, no, this is the victory whereby they overcome the world, even their Faith, which looks to higher and better things than this world hath any, 1 *Joh.* 5. 4, 5. These charming and bewitching things have no power over them, but they go on from strength to strength till they appear before God in *Sion*, and say with *David*, *Whom have I in Heaven but thee, there is none on earth that I can desire in comparison of thee*, Psal. 73. 25.

I have thus briefly gone over the things intended and promised as to this Classis of Saints, the Young men; in relation to which (as to the former also) I have endeavoured to set out their conditions (not by guess and conjecture, but) as they are represented in the Scripture, and have chosen to wave speaking to other things, as intermissions, desertions, *&c.* which our text did not at all lead us, nor hint us to take notice of. I shall shut up all with the Application proper to this Subject, which speaks first to the little Children to prepare for this War, and to the Young men to make good what is said of them, *viz.* that they are strong, *&c.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

The Application.

1. AS for you little Children who have lived hitherto in the Fathers houſe and lain in his boſome, injoying his love without doubts or diſputes, let me beſpeak you to look for and to prepare for temptations: Satan makes challenges and deſires to winnow and ſift you (as he did *Job* and *Peter*, *&c.*) *Luke* 22. 31. Therefore watch and pray leſt ye enter into temptation, and beg of God either not to lead you into temptation; or if he will and do (as the Spirit did Chriſt Jeſus) that he will not ſuffer you to be tempted above your ſtrength, but that he will deliver you from the evil, or the evil one. Tell your Father that you have heard what a potent and ſubtle adverſary the Devil is, and that he throws fiery darts to inflame the hearts of Gods Children againſt their Father, and tempts them to worſhip Devils; which are ſuch horrid things, as you would not willingly be acquainted with; but if as he hath glorified his name, ſo he will glorifie it again, then ſay, *Father, thy Will be done* (as your Saviour did) and conclude that your Father will not leave you nor forſake you, that you ſhould be a prey to this mighty, and a captive to this ſtrong one. If you ſhould any of you be called out to this War, take theſe encouragements for your help.

1. The cauſe is good, called the *good fight* of

of Faith (*libertas agitur; pro aris & focis*) the Devil would turn you out of house and home, and deprive you of your right and title to Heaven; 'tis about heavenly things this dispute, *Ephes.* 6. 12. and whether ye be the Sons of God or no? In other wars the cause is none of the best, nay many times very bad; but this is clear and without exception, that we should fight against the Devil (and all his works) which wars against our comforts, souls and happiness. Fear not then but fight, for your Cause is good and just. 'Tis to defend your own rights and liberties.

2. The Battel is the Lords; this *Goliah* defies not only *Israel* but the living God; in calling your title into question, he calls the truth of God and the witness of his Spirt into question, so that God is engaged with you, and will plead his as well as your Cause, and will be jealous for his name and for his people: you fight for God, and therefore God will fight for you. As you may be said to help the Lord against the mighty, so the Lord will help you against their might: *This day* (saith *David* to *Goliah*) *will the Lord deliver thee into my hands, for the Battel is the Lords*, 1 Sam. 17. 46, 47. If the Lord be with us, it matters not who be against us, the gates (power and policy) of Hell shall not prevail: no, not Death it self; for that *Grotius* understands by the gates of Hell.

3. You fight under such a Captain-General (Jesus Christ) as never turn'd his back, was never foil'd, but went alwaies on conquering and to conquer. *Nil desperandum, Christo duce*

&

Respice Christo, Look to Jesus who is the leader and bringer up, the Author and will be the finisher of your Faith, *Heb.* 12. 2, 3. This great Commander doth not say (*ite* but *venite*) go and fight, but follow me: and 'tis alwaies an huge incouragement to bear Arms and fight under the conduct of a successful General.

4. You are to fight with an enemy that hath been conquered by Christ Jesus, and by many of your Brethren: the Devil is not so dreadful as he was before Christ died, *Heb.* 2. 14, 15. The Prince of peace hath conquered the King of terrors; and many of your Brethren have confuted and defeated him many times. 'Tis true his wiles are his worst weapons, and his wit is more than his might, yet 'tis true his ill-will and malice is more than his wit, and he hath been befool'd many a time notwithstanding all his cunning devices, and put to shame for his malicious lying, as in *Job*, case and many others.

5. You are provided with Armor of proof (Armor of Gods making as well as of Gods appointing) and 'tis such as there is none such, none like it. You have the same Sword that Jesus Christ, and the Young men your Brethren have conquered the Devil by; and the same Shield of Faith to quench his fiery darts with: this Armour is mighty through God, 2 *Cor.* 10, 3.

6. God will take care for your pay, you shall not war at your own charges, 1 *Cor.* 9. 7. beside the glory of overcoming, you shall have a Crown of glory after you have overcome, 2 *Tim.* 4. 7, 8. To him that overcometh God will give honour, for they that honour him he

will honor; their labour shall not be in vain in the Lord, 1 *Cor.* 15. 58.

7. God hath promised you success and Victory (*certus enim Promissit Apollo*) he will tread Satan under *your* feet shortly, *Rom.* 16. 20. He shall be cast out, and you shall overcome him, *Rev.* 12. 9, 10, 11. Read the 41. of *Isay*, from the eighth to the seventeenth Verse, that through the comfort of that, as other Scriptures also (written for our consolation) you may have hope and strong consolation.

Well then, be strong in the Lord and the power of his might, for by no other strength do any or can you prevail: though it be said that by strength shall no man prevail, yet by strength do all men prevail, 'tis an Orthodoxe Paradoxe. By strength no man nor Devil shall or can prevail against God, 1 *Sam.* 2. 8, —— 10. Let no man therefore provoke the Lord to jealousie, for he hath no match, he is stronger than all, and none shall take his Saints out of his hand; who ever fought against God and prospered? but there is a strength of Faith and Prayer (like *Jacobs*) by which some prevail with God, and they are Princes the true *Israelites*, *Hos.* 12. 3, 4. with *Gen.* 32. 24, —— 28. When God yields we prevail with him; and when we yield not but are strong in the Lord, resisting the Devil, we prevail over him. 'Tis by no strength but by Christ strengthening us that we can do all things, *Phil.* 4. 13. 'Tis not by strength of wit or reason, not by strength of hands or legs, or strength of our Spirit and courage, but by the strength of God, of his Word,

Grace

Grace and Spirit abiding in us that we prevail.

2. As to the Young men, I have no more to say but to exhort them to make good what hath been said of them in all particulars. Make it appear that you are strong, that the Word of God abideth in you, that you have overcome the evil one, which will prove that God is your God and Father, *Rev.* 21. 7. and that none shall separate you from the Love of God in Christ, *Rom.* 8. ult. shew the tokens and signs of your Victory, let the dispositions and conversations of Young men be apparent in your lives, holding forth the Word of Life and power in the works of your lives; that so you may grow up to be Fathers in *Israel* and gray-hair'd in righteousness, which will be to you a Crown of glory, as strength was your glory while you were Young men. Live and thrive like them that eat, digest and concoct strong meat (that feed on the eternal Love of God, and the Priesthood of our Lord Jesus Christ) which belongs to the little Children, to you and to the Fathers, who (all in your several measures) by reason of use (or habit) have your senses exercised to discern between good and evil, *Heb.* 5. 14.

The FOURTH

CLASSIS,

OR,

FATHERS

IN

ISRAEL.

From 1 *John* 2. 13, 14.

Vers. 13. *I write unto you, Fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning.*———

Vers. 14. *I have written to you, Fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning.*———

THE Fathers, it seems (if I may adventure to say any thing of them) are usually such for Age as well as attainments, the Ancients and Elders of *Israel*, whose gray hairs are wise and sound in the way, and filled with the fruits of

of righteousness, which is their Crown of Glory. The Word of God dwells richly in them in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, in sense, experience and judgement, by which they discern persons and things that differ. They are πνευματικοι and τελειοι spiritual and perfect in the third and superlative degree. They have gone through all the former States and Degrees, having (like *Enoch*) a continual intercourse and conversation with, as well as knowledge of him that is from the beginning from the first to last: and by reason of this their knowledge and experimental wisdom, *Jam.* 3. 17, 18. they are able to speak to all the Cases of Conscience (and the various dispensations) which belong to the whole Christian course: they can divide the Word aright and speak words sureable (and in season) to all; giving every one their portion. They bring out of their treasures things new and old; they know how to speak to the faint and weary, to the broken-hearted, and them that are cast down, to the deserted and tempted ones, knowing also how to discern between form and power, hypocrisie and sincerity, pretensions and realities, *&c.* But—— *Hæc desiderantur.* Of this State let daies speak, and multitude of years teach this wisdom, *Job* 32. 7. I am but few of daies and durst not shew you mine opinion (that I may borrow more of *Elihu's* words) in relation to this State, beyond what I have now hinted in the general. To conclude therefore, my design being to help Christians to discover their States, attainments and growths, I shall to all that hath been said add

but

but a few things more to further this design.

1. That a Christian may know his state, in what Classis and Degree he is. As it may be known whether in the Faith, 2 *Cor.* 13. 5. So it may be known how far a man hath proceeded in the Faith. For though there may be some Heteroclita (*quæ genus & flexum variant*) some random-Saints, if I may so speak, that are not fixed but fleeting; yet these also may be reduced (as to their state in general) to one or other Classis for the most part.

2. 'Tis a great advantage (in many respects) to know where one is: to know ones place, rank and station: as 'tis for a Servant in a Family, or a Souldier in an Army. They that know not what their work is, know not how to do their work; but if we know our station, our work (both what and how to be done) is clear before us, and we may up and be doing.

3. Though a Saint should be content with his present state, yet but for the present; he should desire and pray, breath and pant, he should hunger and thirst, indeavour and labour after progress and preferment. Though he should not forget to bless God for, yet he should forget (what is behind) to rest in, what he hath; and not think that he hath attained so much, or were already so perfect, as if there were no more to be attained; reaching and pressing forward (as *Paul* did) is the duty of all, till they attain to the Resurrection of the Dead. There's no state on earth so satisfying as should take a man off from looking & hastning to the coming of Christ, that we may be alwaies with him and altogether like him,

him, *Phil* 1,23. 1 *Joh.* 3.2. 2 *Pet.* 3.11,——13. The good and bad things and conditions in this world call upon us to long to be above in Heaven; For, if it be bad to be here, 'tis good to be there; if it be good to be here, 'tis better to be there, to be sure: though we may have enough sometime to say, 'Tis good to be here, yet we have never enough to say, 'Tis best to be here.

4. We should all take heed and beware that we do not place our growth and advance, only in knowledge (head and Book learning) nor only in gifts and parts, nor only in common graces; no, nor in going from one opinion to another, or one form of Church-Government to another, from one profession to another; this I fear hath been a great mistake, as if it were a going on to, when (alas! if this be all!) 'tis a going from perfection: for to be tossed to and fro with every wind of Doctrine, is but babish, *Ephes.* 4. 13,——16. Alas! what is't to be Episcopal, Presbyterian, Congregational, *&c.* our Religion lies not, much less our perfection, in these or any other opinions, and forms of Government. I doubt not but there are Saints in all these Forms, yet withal I believe and affirm that none of these Forms make them Saints; a man may be in any of these and yet be but a Babe, yea and not be a Babe but carnal. This is but like them that go up and down the Streets of *London*, crying, Old Sattin and ends of Gold and Silver, by which they never grow rich, nor get any considerable estate.

5. We should be as careful to mind and discharge the duties as to enjoy the priviledges and

and dignities of our state; and mind not only to be in Christ but to walk in him and as he walked. Study commands as well as promises, and look after light that ye may walk in the light; for if we walk in the light (as children of light) we have fellowship one with another (*i. e.* God and we have.) Thus as God glorifies us, we glorifie him, for which we should have a great ambition; yea, and to let our light so shine before men, that they also may glorifie our Father which is in Heaven, *Matth.* 5. 13, ——16. Let us live in love, and truth it in love, for oh how good and pleasant a thing it is for Brethren to dwell together in unity! Let us not be like *Ephraim* and *Judah*, to envy and vex, to bite and devour one another; but love one another with a pure heart fervently. In fine, let us make it our business (and our pleasure too) to adorn the Doctrine of God our Saviour, and to walk worthy of God to all-well-pleasing; to which end, *Let us grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, that to him* (and to the Father by him) *there may be thanks and glory given, both now and for ever.* Amen.

FINIS.